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REV. DIONYSIUS LARDNER, LL.D. F.R.S. L.&E.
M.R.I.A. F.R.A.S. F.L.S. F.Z.S. Hon. F.C.P.S. &c. &c.

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CONTENTS

OF
THE SECOND VOLUME.

	PAGE
ARMAND JEAN DU PLESSIS, CARDINAL DE RICHELIEU - - -	1
AXEL, COUNT OXENSTEIRN - -	176
GASPAR DE GUZMAN, COUNT OLIVAREZ, DUKE OF SAN LUCAR - -	220
JULIUS, CARDINAL MAZARIN - -	269



LIVES
OF
EMINENT FOREIGN STATESMEN

ARMAND JEAN DU PLESSIS, CARDINAL
DE RICHELIEU.

BORN 1585, DIED 1642.

THAT space of time which elapsed between the birth and the death of the cardinal de Richelieu, offers a period of history as momentous as any which the world has seen since the fall of the Roman empire, as fertile in extraordinary events, as productive of important consequences. Standing midway between two great revolutions, religious and political, the epoch of the cardinal de Richelieu stretches forth a hand to both,—leaning upon the period of the Reformation, as its precursor, and bringing forward the revolution of the eighteenth century as its direct descendant. By the remote consequences of the former of those events, the whole life of Richelieu, as a statesman, was affected; and, by the effect produced by his own actions upon the state of society, the first preparation was made for the great catastrophe of the French revolution. As it is always both interesting and instructive to examine how the passions and efforts of each individual influence the well-being of their fellow-creatures, the life of the cardinal de Richelieu affords a subject well worthy of contemplation; inasmuch as the biography of no other man, perhaps, displays so complete and extraordinary an

instance of the whole world being affected, at the time, by the particular ambition of one private man, and the whole condition of society changed, long after his death, by the result of actions which had for their object nothing but his own aggrandisement or his own preservation.

Armand Jean du Plessis was born in Paris, on the 5th of September, 1585. His family was noble but not wealthy ; his father distinguished in arms, and holding various important posts at the court of Henry IV. of France ; and his mother, the daughter of an ancient house, and endowed with much sagacity and strong natural sense. Five years after the birth of Richelieu his father died, leaving three sons, of whom Armand was the youngest, and two daughters, who were married early to nobles of the French court. The church and the camp were the usual resources, in those days, of the younger branches of noble houses ; and as the bishopric of Luçon, which the family of Plessis could command for one of the sons, was destined for Alphonso, the second ; Armand, the youngest of the three, was dedicated from his infancy to the profession of arms. Brought up under the guidance of his mother, he wanted no instruction which could qualify him for the course which it was supposed he would have to run ; and he even received, in early youth, a much more extensive acquaintance with letters than was usually given at that period to persons destined to a military life. The prior of St. Florent was, we are told, his first preceptor, and, at a later period, he passed several years in the colleges of Navarre and Lisieux.

As early as possible Richelieu entered the army, and at the same time took the title of lord of Chillon, a small estate belonging to his family. Scarcely, however, did his profession for life thus seem decided, when an unforeseen event changed his whole prospects, and led him into that course in which his after-years were passed. His brother Alphonso had been formally named to the bishopric of Luçon ; but, of a melancholy temperament and super-

stitious mind, he suddenly formed the resolution of abandoning the world ; renounced the bishopric to which he had been appointed, and retired to a convent of Carthusians. The see thus left vacant was not of very great importance, but the revenues thereunto attached were still an object to the family of Richelieu ; and he was induced without difficulty to quit the profession of arms, and apply himself to the study of theology. No difficulty attended his nomination to the bishopric which his brother had renounced ; and the young Du Plessis seems to have turned his whole efforts to distinguish himself in his new career with the same eager ambition which distinguished him through life. In this pursuit he both miscalculated his own powers, and misunderstood the means of obtaining his object. He never seems to have contemplated the attainment of eminence by virtue, purity, and truth ; but he appears to have imagined that distinction was alone to be gained by the display of subtle rhetoric and by a deep knowledge of controversial divinity. He passed through his studies, however, with considerable applause ; and though he never acquired any reputation as a controversialist, yet he was marked for a studious and diligent scholar, spending the greater part of his time at a little distance from Paris in reading with a doctor of Louvain, then one of the most celebrated schools of theology.

At length, in 1606, while still considerably below the age which the church of Rome had fixed for consecration to the episcopal functions, he applied to the pope for a dispensation in regard to the term required ; and, after having urged his suit for some time through the cardinal du Perron, and the French ambassador at the Holy See, he himself proceeded to Rome, to solicit the favour he required in his own person. A curious anecdote in regard to his conduct on this occasion is told by contemporary writers. He obtained, we are informed, an audience of the supreme pontiff ; in the course of which he greatly conciliated the regard of Paul V., who then filled the apostolic chair ; and, on being asked his

real age, induced that prelate to believe that he was considerably older than he really was. As the difference between the age he named and that required by the rules of the church was not apparently very great, the dispensation was granted ; and Richelieu was accordingly consecrated to the bishopric of Luçon on the 17th of April, 1607, by the cardinal de Givry. No sooner, however, had the ceremony taken place than the new bishop wrote to the pope, confessing that he had deceived him, and begging his absolution for the falsehood he had committed. Papal morality, however, in this instance did not show itself very implacable ; and Paul, instead of evincing any indignation at the deceit, only declared that he who had practised it was a clever person. He proved himself to be so indeed ; and the unscrupulous use of means which, at the age of twenty-one, he displayed in hastening his elevation, afforded no bad specimen of the conduct which he followed in maintaining his authority through life.

After having obtained the bishopric, Richelieu's next great object was to advance himself at the court ; but, finding himself overlooked in the crowd of eager and jealous courtiers who surrounded the throne, he determined to call attention by the display of his talents, and applied himself to establish his fame as a popular preacher, in which he was eminently successful. The favour of the court followed ; and he soon had an opportunity, if not of obtaining preferment, at least of choosing that path which was certain to lead to it in the end. It was now that he first exhibited that peculiar talent which led him on with unerring sagacity from step to step in the first difficult ascent of ambition, — the talent of divining, as it were, what persons and what parties were those which would succeed or fail in the same course which he had laid out for himself.

France had long been on fire with factions which had been smothered by the power of Henry IV., but had not been totally extinguished ; and the court of that monarch was still filled with a thousand jealous and

turbulent leaders, only waiting an opportunity to range themselves in separate bodies, and struggle for their own interests, at the expense of both their sovereign and their country. But it was to none of these that the keen-sighted bishop of Luçon attached himself. Mary de Medicis, the queen of Henry IV., possessed neither great influence over her husband, nor great popularity with his subjects; but nevertheless to an Italian adventurer, named Concino Concini, better known as the *maréchal d'Ancre*, Richelieu now paid his chief court, solely, it would seem, on account of the favour with which that person and his wife were regarded by the queen. We can scarcely believe this conduct to have been caused by any accidental circumstance, because it is perfectly consistent with the whole of his behaviour through the struggles which preceded his elevation to power: and yet, as there was no great probability of the queen surviving her husband, and as the intellect of the king was in full vigour, it was not likely that either Mary or her favourite would ever be admitted to such a share of power as to render their countenance necessary to so ambitious a man as Richelieu. It was to Concini, however, and, through him, to the queen, that the bishop of Luçon endeavoured to recommend himself; and the elevation of those two persons to authority took place much sooner than he or any one could have expected.

On the 14th of May, 1610, Henry IV. was assassinated, and the regency of the kingdom fell immediately into the hands of Mary de Medicis. The schemes of the great monarch who was just dead were abandoned as soon as his eyes were closed; his enemies became the allies of his widow; the strong hand which had repressed the turbulent nobles of France was not removed without effect; and an instant struggle took place for power, for favour, and for money. During a certain time the honest and attached minister of Henry IV. continued to stem the tide of faction and corruption; but all the selfish men of whom the court was composed united their efforts to drive forth one who was inimical to them all, because he was

inimical to vice : and Sully, after having shown some weaknesses that we must regret, together with many virtues we cannot but admire, stripped himself of his principal offices, and retired from the court. As soon as his fate was assured, the struggle commenced between those who had all, more or less, contributed to work his fall from power ; and the prince de Condé, the duke de Bouillon, the count de Soissons, Sillery, the chancellor, Villeroy, the secretary, and Jeannin, the president, with many other princes and statesmen, seem to have forgotten every thing in the spirit of faction, and the greedy rapacity of speculation. In their struggles the *maréchal d'Ancre* saw his greatest security ; and he laboured with skill and considerable success to keep those persons divided who could only be expected to unite for his destruction.

At length, pursuing her favourite project of uniting the houses of Austria and Bourbon, Mary de Medicis concluded a marriage between her young son, Louis XIII., and the princess Anne, *infanta* of Spain ; while the hand of one of her daughters was at the same time given to the catholic king. This double marriage was instantly seized upon as a pretext by the various malcontents, who were beginning to forget their private animosities in their general hatred of Concini ; and, before Henry IV. had been dead three years, six or seven different provinces were in arms against the regent. Faction has always had an excellent pretext, so flexible and shadowy, as to be grasped and exposed with difficulty, so specious and engaging, as to be certain of attracting multitudes. This pretext was of course used on the present occasion, and the public good was declared to be all that the rebels had in view. Concini, however, knew the men and their motives ; and, as he had not forces prepared to oppose them in arms, he bought them separately at very moderate prices.

Through all these events the bishop of Luçon remained attached to the party of the queen ; and it is not wonderful that he acquired, in such scenes, a de-

gree of hatred and contempt for the great nobles of France, which was not without effect at an after-period. In the following year the king attained his majority; and the first step of the queen and her council upon this occasion showed considerable wisdom. In order to conciliate public favour, and to obtain from all the different orders of the state support for the government of her son against the inordinate power and rapacious fury of the chief nobility, she summoned the states-general; and, notwithstanding the manifold arts made use of to influence the election of deputies, the assembly showed itself calm and firm in opposing many of the evils which the weakness of a regency had generated. In this assembly the bishop of Luçon appeared as one of the deputies of the clergy, and to him was entrusted the delivery of their report on the close of the states. His speech was eloquent and dignified; but in its course are to be found the strongest traces of that consideration of his own individual interests which was never forgotten by the young prelate, together with the most open flattery of the queen mother.

New intrigues and new revolts succeeded; but, throughout the whole of the pitiful manœuvres of the nobility, Richelieu continued to seek the favour of those who alone could bestow power, and at length obtained from the court the first office which he held as a courtier, that of almoner to the young queen Anne of Austria. This post, however, he was afterwards permitted to sell, and derived from it a considerable sum, which enabled him to appear with that splendour for which he displayed through life a strong inclination. Rumour, indeed, attributed to the bishop the infamy of having raised the eyes of passion to the young queen herself; and the cause assigned for his speedy retirement from her court, was the severe reproof with which his bold advances had been met: but no corroborative fact has been brought forward in support of these suppositions, except the persevering enmity which Richelieu displayed through life to Anne of Austria.

His first step, however, in the path of ambition being once taken, his further advance was more rapid. Shortly after he had retired from the household of the young queen, he received from Mary de Medicis the appointment of counsellor of state, and was nominated ambassador to the court of Spain ; which mission, however, although he undertook it willingly, he never fulfilled. Fresh intrigues took place ; and the object of the malcontents at the court became every day more decidedly and unanimously the removal of Concini. At first, the favourite and the queen hesitated, and seemed disposed to temporise ; but the commanding mind of Richelieu was now beginning to have great influence upon those he served ; and, by his counsel, the same severe and decisive measures were adopted which he himself would have pursued had he been in the situation of the *maréchal d'Ancre*. Bold policy, however, conducted by an impotent mind, is like a heavy sword in a weak hand — severe where it does strike, but serving little to defend him who wields it. The prince of Condé was arrested, and a tumult which followed in Paris was promptly suppressed ; all the nobles who retired from the court were declared guilty of *lèse majesté* ; the ministry was changed ; and the duke of Guise placed at the head of a considerable force, to reduce the provinces which had been anew brought into revolt. All this speaks strongly of the vigorous mind of Richelieu ; and we accordingly find him appointed as an additional secretary of state, with a patent of precedence over his senior in office. For some time success followed these measures : the duke of Guise was fortunate in many of his undertakings ; and Richelieu, having been sent to confer with the duke of Nevers, who was in arms in Champagne, received from him a written justification of his revolt, which the duke certainly intended to be made public, but which the minister shrewdly suppressed ; and while Nevers waited for an answer to his manifesto, the duke of Guise advanced against him, and drove him out of Champagne.

At the very time, however, that these events were holding out the most favourable prospects to Concini, an intrigue was carried on in the heart of the court, which was destined to terminate in his destruction. Louis XIII., young, weak, and irresolute, had willingly left the reins of government in the hands of his mother, well satisfied to be spared the trouble of thought, and the pain of doing justice. His great pleasure was the chase ; and, in order to keep his mind diverted from affairs of state, every luxurious improvement upon his favourite pastime, every means and every inducement to be long absent from his court, had been sought for and procured with politic attention. Amongst other manœuvres of the same kind, the queen and Concini had selected for his chief companion a young gentleman of the name of Luines, whose sole recommendation seemed to be his skill in various pastimes, and his passion for the same amusements as the king. But Luines, without any very high qualities to render him formidable, was not devoid of ambition and dissimulation ; and, sharing the universal hatred which existed towards the maréchal d'Ancre, he determined to use the great favour in which he stood with the king, to induce that young monarch to take into his own hands the authority he had too long suffered to rest with others, and to destroy an adventurer who had drawn upon his head the hatred of the good as well as of the bad. With the rashness and excess usually the offspring of timidity and inexperience, it was determined to murder the maréchal d'Ancre ; for, though the deed was perpetrated by the king's command, yet every execution without trial is, of course, an assassination.

The plot was skilfully and deliberately prepared ; and on the same day, and nearly at the same moment, Concini was killed upon the bridge of the Louvre by De Vitry, captain of the king's guards, and Mary de Medicis was made an honourable prisoner, and conducted to the castle of Blois. The greater part of the ministers whom she had lately displaced were re-established in their offices ; and it was naturally to be expected, that all those who

owed their elevation to Concini would share in his fall. Such especially might have been anticipated as the fate of the bishop of Luçon, to whom the severe and successful measures which the queen's favourite had lately employed were very generally attributed. On presenting himself before the king, however, it was found that Richelieu, with that keen sagacity which we have before noticed, had foreseen who was the next person likely to rise into authority, and had so far obtained the favour of Luines, that he himself became his advocate with the young monarch. It is true, that his success on this occasion was not of long duration, but it was sufficient to shield him from the consequences of his participation in the acts of Concini. Luines assured the king, on his personal knowledge, that his majesty had not a more faithful servant than the bishop of Luçon, and the monarch, therefore, commanded Richelieu "to serve him as heretofore."

The prelate, nevertheless, saw at once that great difficulties lay before him in the present instance; and he represented to the king and the favourite, that, as the former ministers, who conceived that they had various causes of enmity against him, were reinstated in the council, they might offer him some opposition in the execution of his duty unless the king's will were formally notified to them. Louis accordingly directed one of his personal attendants to accompany Richelieu to the council chamber, and inform the council that it was the king's pleasure that the bishop of Luçon should serve him as heretofore. Whether the precise words were suggested by Richelieu, or not we cannot tell, but they evidently implied that his precedence of the other secretaries was still to be continued to him. The whole council, however, were more or less opposed to him; and, after many messages sent to and from the king, in order to obtain a definite explanation of his will, the king declared that his intention solely was, that Richelieu should serve him as a counsellor of state; and at the same time he revoked the patent of precedence which had been given to him.

The statesman easily foresaw, that this degradation submitted to, would inevitably lead to others ; and, trusting that a time would come when the influence of the queen mother would again be felt, he retired at once to Blois, and took upon himself the humble occupation of superintendant of her household. Richelieu and Luines, it would seem, mutually appreciated each other ; and the prelate may well be supposed to have seen that the favourite, whose incapacity for affairs of state he clearly perceived, could not long retain, in separate prisons, the prince of Condé and Mary de Medicis, without raising up such a formidable party in favour of one or the other, as would ultimately overthrow his own power. It is probable that Richelieu calculated on his own skill being sufficient to insure that the faction, whose rise he thus foresaw, should espouse the cause of the queen ; but Luines understood his crafty and enterprising nature, and although in general imprudent and careless, he took the wise step of separating Richelieu from his royal mistress.

The prelate had scarcely been a month at Blois ere he was commanded to retire to the priory of Coussay in Anjou, and was thence sent to his bishopric of Luçon, where he shortly after received an order to quit the kingdom and take up his abode at Avignon, then a possession of the pope. While there, he amused himself with composing some very inferior works upon theological subjects, and seemed for a time forgotten by his friends and his enemies. In the mean time Luines, into whose hands had fallen almost all the immense wealth of the marshal d'Ancre, ruled the mind of the young and imbecile king, and day by day fixed his power more firmly on the favour of the monarch. It was clear to him, however, that he must soon either set free the prince de Condé or the queen ; and he is supposed to have leaned towards the latter plan, believing Mary's power with the people to be but small, and her influence over the king to be ended for ever. He hesitated so long, however, that others snatched from him the advantages which he might have gained.

The queen was still not without secret friends at the court ; and, having fixed her eyes upon the well-known duke of Epemon, a bold, calm, and skilful man, she employed various agents to work upon the weak points of his character, his haughtiness and vanity, which were offended both by the power of Luines, and by some neglect which that minister had evinced towards him. The favourite took little pains, indeed, to court the support of the duke, although his influence, and, still more, his abilities, were to be feared ; and, in the end, Epemon suddenly retired from Paris, and entered into secret negotiations with the imprisoned queen. The conduct of that nobleman, during the latter part of 1618, might well have awakened the suspicions of Luines, but no means were employed either to gain him to the royalists, or to impede his proceedings in favour of the queen. He was suffered to traverse the whole of France with 300 horse, and to take up his position at Loches, whence he could effectually aid Mary de Medicis in her meditated escape from Blois.

At length, in the month of January, 1619, on a cold dark night, six persons chosen for the service presented themselves beneath one of the windows of the castle of Blois, and a ladder having been reared from the side of the fosse, the queen, followed by one of her women, descended from the window, and was hurried on to a carriage prepared for her at a short distance. In it, with a lantern, without which, we are told, she dared not pass the night in her carriage, she remained till the whole party reached Montrichard, where she was met by the archbishop of Toulouse, son of the duke of Epemon, the abbé Ruccellai, and several other persons attached to her cause. She thence hastened forward to Loches, where she was received by the duke himself, and then proceeded to Angoulême, at which place almost all the malcontents who had abandoned the court since the death of Concini had previously assembled. Here she found herself supported by such a formidable party, that she determined to fly no farther ;

and the aspect of affairs grew so dark towards Luines, that it is probable his ruin or a bloody civil war would have been the consequence, had he not taken the determination of calling the cunning of Richelieu to his aid.

The bishop of Luçon, it would seem, had been kept in ignorance of the measures employed to liberate the queen ; and, beginning to despair of the ultimate success of her party, as well as to grow tired of the insipid inactivity of Avignon, he had sent his brother-in-law, Du Pont Courlay, to offer his services to Luines, with many vehement professions of attachment. The favourite seized the opportunity, and instantly wrote a letter to Richelieu, directing him to hasten to the queen mother, and endeavour to bring about a reconciliation between her and the king. The letter contained a passport ; and Richelieu, perceiving the immense influence he must necessarily acquire with both parties by successfully conducting such a negotiation, set out immediately for Angoulême. He was arrested, however, on the banks of the Rhone, almost at the commencement of his journey, and was conducted to Lyons ; but the sight of his passport at once caused the governor of that city to set him at liberty with many excuses ; and the only result was, to show Richelieu that he was of sufficient importance in the eyes of the king's court to have caused great precautions to be taken against him during the period of his exile.

On the present occasion, his interests were identified to a certain extent with those of Luines, as upon the ultimate reconciliation of the king with his mother, of course depended the bishop's own advancement ; and he had not yet reached that point in the progress of ambition where interest is sacrificed to vengeance. He proceeded, therefore, to Angoulême with all speed, and with the firm resolution of effecting the purposes of the favourite at the highest price he could obtain for his services. He had the skill, it would seem, to persuade the queen and all those about her that he had taken the long and, to him, perilous journey from Avignon, solely from attach-

nment to her ; but, finding her surrounded by those whose views were opposed to his own, before he suffered any accommodation with the king to be spoken of, he applied himself to sow dissension and suspicion in the hearts of Mary and those who had liberated her. In this endeavour he was fully successful. Epernon himself, who had spent immense sums, and risked his liberty, if not his life, for the deliverance of the queen, was soon looked upon coldly at her court. Ruccellai was dismissed, and many of her other most attached friends were treated with doubt and distrust. Then it was that negotiations were opened with Louis and his favourite ; and the king offered to his mother several strong places to be given up to officers of her nomination, as a security for her safety and freedom, if she would return to his court.

Richelieu, who now possessed her whole and sole confidence, conducted the treaty, and derived the immediate benefit of filling up the governments thus conceded with his own friends and relations. In the citadel of Angers, the principal town given to the queen, he placed his elder brother, and various other appointments showed that he, at least, was not destined to be left without advantage in the negotiation.

Still, however, the stipulations were not all fulfilled ; the king advanced to Tours, and urged his mother to forget the past, and once more appear at his court : but new difficulties were raised ; the reinstatement of the duke of Epernon, and all the officers who had served the queen, in the posts they had formerly held, was demanded, as well as a pecuniary supply, and various other minor concessions. Luines promised all ; but there was a tardiness about the execution of any of the terms, which gave the queen a very fair pretext for delaying her return to the court ; and, by the advice of the bishop of Luçon, who had no inclination that the reconciliation should take place without the certainty of seeing both his own interests and those of his mistress fully secured, Mary for a long time avoided the meeting with her son. At

length, she visited him at Tours, sending on Richelieu to announce her coming. The prelate was received with joy and honour, and the queen with tenderness ; but the clear eyes of Richelieu soon perceived that there was little intention of executing the treaty if its provisions could be evaded. Neither was he satisfied with what he had obtained as yet ; and, after a few days' sojourn at Tours, the queen positively refused to accompany her son to Paris, alleging that it would seem as if he brought her back in triumph.

On this point nothing could move her ; and, having proceeded to Angers, while the king returned to the capital, she commenced a new system of demands and difficulties, and affected to advocate the liberation of the prince of Condé. In these circumstances, however, Luines acted with a wiser policy than either the queen or Richelieu anticipated ; and, foreseeing that the deliverance of a prince who had been imprisoned by Concini could not be much longer delayed, he himself proceeded to Vincennes, and bore to the prince at once his own apologies for the tardiness of the act, and the news of his liberation. He thus created for himself a temporary support against the growing power of the queen ; but Luines, with the usual excess of inexperience, went too far in his concessions to the prince of Condé, and raised up an influence nearly as dangerous to his own as that of Mary herself. He caused the king to publish a declaration, in which he blamed severely the imprisonment of the prince ; and, as it had been the act of the queen, by the advice of Richelieu, he thus drew their animosity directly against himself, instead of driving them to accede to the terms he proposed, by fear of the prince's influence, which was probably one part of his plan.

In the mean time, supported by the prince of Condé, and communicating to him a share of his power, Luines gave greater offence daily to the other nobles, who were entirely excluded from all authority. The queen's demands increased instead of diminishing ; and, under the shrewd guidance of the bishop of Luçon, she daily

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acquired greater strength, and assumed a more and more threatening aspect towards the court. The Huguenots sought her, and were graciously received by the catholic prelate and princess; and jealousy of Condé, who was now in high favour, as well as hatred of Luines, who dispensed all the wealth and honours of the state with a careless and injudicious hand, day by day brought her new adherents. The duke of Mayenne, the duke of Némours, the countess of Soissons, her son, and the count of St. Aignan, quitted the court: the dukes of Montmorency, Epernon, and Longueville had done so long before. A multitude of inferior nobles were added. Guienne, Saintonge, Anjou, and part of Normandy were in the hands of the malcontents; and it is not to be supposed that the queen became more tractable under the great power she obtained.

Luines, upheld by the prince de Condé, would make no such decided concession as the exigency of the moment required for the preservation of peace; and both parties, after long and disgusting negotiations, characterised by craft and falsehood on both sides, at length appealed to arms. On the part of the king, however, the first warlike operations were conducted with extraordinary vigour. The royal army, consisting of less than 10,000 men, nominally commanded by the monarch, but in fact directed by Condé, entered Normandy, and in a short space of time reduced the whole province to obedience. A number of commanders, who had vowed to hold out to the last on behalf of the queen, betraying her cause, either from terror or for gold, surrendered without striking a stroke; and the king, marching straight across the country, approached the town of Angers, in which his mother had fortified herself.

The troops which had been levied in her favour were by this time considerable in number; and the duke of Epernon strongly advised her to suffer him and the duke of Mayenne to march their forces from their several governments, and make a stand against the royal army at Angers. She would then have had at her disposal forces

superior to any that Luines could bring against her, and two of the first commanders in France to direct the military operations on her part. But she confided entirely in the bishop of Luçon ; and, as it would appear, that prelate betrayed his trust. Whether from jealousy of the dukes of Epemon and Mayenne, or from a leaning to the party of the court, we do not know, but certain it is that Richelieu caused the queen to reject the advice which would have put her in a more commanding position than she ever obtained, and to follow schemes that entirely placed her at the mercy of her son. The two dukes were directed to remain with their troops in defence of the provinces they commanded, and the queen continued at Angers, protracting the negotiations which had been already begun with her son, till his cannon were at her gates. At length, terrified by the near approach of a superior army, she hastily signed a treaty which was agreed upon between Richelieu and the duke de Bellegarde, and the same day her troops abandoned the defence of the Pont de Ce, her principal outpost, in the most dastardly, if not the most treacherous manner. All further opposition on her part was ended by this loss ; and, peace being obtained, she advanced to Brissac to meet the king, who, as well as his favourite, treated her with every sort of distinction and respect. The stipulations which she made, however, were disgraceful to herself, and only advantageous to Richelieu, in whose favour the king agreed to demand a cardinal's hat from the see of Rome, while, at the same time, he promised him a place in the council of state. All the other partisans of the queen were abandoned to their fate, and the only conditions exacted for their protection was an amnesty for all who laid down their arms within eight days.

So far Richelieu only appeared to have acted as every body might have expected from his well-known character ; but a marriage which was now arranged between his niece, Mademoiselle du Pont du Courlai and the marquis de Combalet, nephew of the duke of Luines, caused

many a shrewd suspicion, that the conduct of the queen's favourite had been directed by the favourite of her son. The duke of Luines, nevertheless, used the advantages he had gained with great moderation; and, unwilling to leave a party either for the queen or the prince de Condé to fall back upon, he soon, by favours and concessions, induced the dukes of Espernon and Mayenne, and the other nobles who had espoused the queen's cause, to lay down their arms, perceiving clearly that to reduce them by force would be little less disadvantageous to himself than to leave them in rebellion.

Thus ended the intrigues of Angiers in which Richelieu had taken so leading a part, and from which he derived such apparent advantages; but new intrigues were only to begin, the consequences of which were less pleasant to him. The military operations which had chiefly led to the king's success had been entirely directed by the prince de Condé; and the result had given him so much influence at court, that Luines found it would be necessary to counterbalance his power by increasing the authority of the queen. That minister, however, felt a natural fear and antipathy towards Richelieu, which the bishop's superior talents and unscrupulous conduct were calculated to produce on weaker minds of the same kind. He dreaded, therefore, his further elevation; and while he endeavoured to court the favour of the queen mother for himself, he hoped that it would diminish towards Richelieu. In the mean time, he delayed the absolute marriage of his nephew with the niece of the bishop of Luçon; and, while he gave public directions to the ambassador of France at the papal court, to solicit the cardinal's hat for that prelate, he employed a secret agent to oppose his elevation, informed the nuncio in Paris that the king's wishes were very different from those expressed by the ambassador, and even induced Louis to write a letter to the head of the Roman church, admitting that he only pressed for the hat in favour of Richelieu in order to satisfy his mother, while, in reality, he in

no degree desired to obtain so high an honour for a person who had produced great mischief in his dominions.

At length, believing that he had sufficiently worked upon the mind of Mary de Medicis, Luines proposed to her to break off the intended alliance between his family and that of the bishop of Luçon; protesting that it was only with a view of gratifying her majesty that he had ever consented to such a step. Her reply showed him, at once, that the influence of Richelieu was more powerful with her than ever. She demanded loudly that the marriage should be instantly concluded, and made the price of her future support that no further obstacles should be raised to the alliance. Luines submitted, and immediately all his views became changed towards Richelieu. Not only were their family interests now united, but it became necessary for Luines to court the man whom he could not supplant; and every effort was now in reality made to obtain his elevation to the cardinalate. Message after message was sent to Cœuvres, the ambassador; agents of the queen and of Richelieu himself were despatched to Rome; ten cardinals were about to be nominated; and various means were employed to insure that the name of Richelieu should be found upon the list.

The wily court of Rome, however, resorted to a thousand subterfuges to evade the concession; and whether the pope did believe, or only affected to suppose, that the king of France was still not in earnest in his expressed desire, he resisted all solicitations of the marquis de Cœuvres upon a thousand specious prettexts; and only informed him, a day or two before the actual nomination of the cardinals, that his own sovereign in whose name he was urging so vehemently the elevation of the bishop of Luçon had himself written, to oppose his promotion. Cœuvres, thunderstruck and indignant, displayed no more zeal, and wrote to demand his recal from a court where he had been exposed to such disgrace. On the 11th of January

the papal list appeared, and the name of Richelieu was not to be found therein. The French affected, and probably felt, much disappointment; but, a few days after the elevation of so many to the conclave, Paul V. died, and the promises of speedy promotion were renewed in favour of Richelieu.

About the same time*, the duke of Luines obtained from the king the high post of constable; and, desirous of signalising himself in war, of which, as a science, his knowledge was very limited, he soon found an occasion in the revolt of the Huguenots, against whom some severe and unjust measures had been employed during the preceding autumn. The king in person took the field early in the year, and the little principality of Bearn was speedily reduced to obedience; but the siege of St. Jean d'Angely, which succeeded, was protracted much longer than might have been expected, and only terminated on conditions very favourable to the garrison and inhabitants. Several other minor successes followed rapidly; and at length the royal army, under the command of Luines, laid siege to Montauban on the 17th of August. The king's forces were numerous, well supplied, and had, under the command of the constable, a multitude of skilful and experienced soldiers; but the town set all their attempts at defiance; and, after a siege of several months, the monarch was forced to decamp from before a petty city at the extreme verge of his dominions. Louis, who did not greatly aspire to military renown, bore the disgrace with patience, but Luines felt the mortification more deeply; and after lingering on for a few weeks he was seized with putrid fever, and died in the beginning of December.†

The death of Luines was an epoch of great importance to Richelieu, as thereby he saw all the hopes which he had conceived from his alliance with that minister destroyed in a day. Nevertheless, the king was now without a favourite—a situation in which the weakness of his mind never suffered him to remain long;

* April, 1620.

† A. D. 1621.

and Richelieu might have hoped to obtain that place in his regard which others had occupied before, had not the monarch on every occasion evinced towards him that personal dislike and distrust, which had been implanted and nourished by all who felt and dreaded his superiority. A seat in the council had been stipulated for him in the negotiations of Angers, but it had always been withheld; and at the death of the favourite the marriage of his niece was the only promise which had been accomplished.

Looking round the court, however, Richelieu saw none at all competent to maintain the field against him in point of intellect and political skill, and he seems to have waited with greater calmness than he displayed at any other step in the whole march of his ambition; anticipating, with his usual sagacity, that the machinations of one weak courtier against another would, in the end, render his powerful aid necessary to the monarch. It is probable that he felt, that influence founded on such a basis would be much more durable than any authority which could be gained by solicitation and intrigue; and he remained a calm spectator of the manœuvres of all parties, apparently perfectly satisfied with the post of superintendent of the queen's household. For a short time after the death of Luines, the king's dislike to the bishop of Luçon seemed to increase rather than diminish; and he again directed the papal nuncio to inform the pope that any solicitations of the French ambassador for the cardinal's hat in favour of Richelieu, were not to be considered as sincere. These secret instructions, however, were by some indiscretion betrayed, reached the ears of the queen mother, and produced a torrent of reproaches against the king. Louis disclaimed the deed; accused the nuncio of falsehood; and, to prove his innocence of the charge, used such means at the court of Rome as produced the elevation of the bishop of Luçon to a seat in the conclave, on the 25th of September, 1622.

The same cautious policy which he had pursued

hitherto, since the death of Luines, Richelieu continued for some time longer, avoiding the slightest appearance of seeking office, and even affecting ill health, while the queen mother, as if in consideration of her own interests, pressed for his reception in the council. Her own admission to any participation in the government had been long delayed; and all those who surrounded the king opposed the first step of him they felt was destined to control them all. For some time this opposition succeeded; and while the more prominent courtiers disputed the favour of the monarch, and strove to ruin each other, Richelieu remained in comparative obscurity.

At first the prince of Condé led the king's councils; and so long as he could conduct Louis from one part of France to another in triumph over the Huguenots, so long he ruled the monarch; but the opportunities thus afforded were brought to an end by the treaty of Montpellier in October, 1622. The prince de Condé then withdrew for a time from the court, and the king was left without either a favourite or a minister capable of directing his weak and vacillating mind. The persons of the greatest experience in affairs of state which were now left at the court of France were Sillery, the chancellor; his son, the marquis of Puysieux; and the count de Schomberg, who united the posts of grand master of the artillery and superintendent of finance. The two first of these personages were amongst the most bitter enemies of the young cardinal de Richelieu, and even from the third he had never received any great tokens of friendship. It may well be supposed, therefore, that he saw the most violent animosity grow up between Schomberg, on the one part, and the chancellor and his son, on the other, with no small feelings of satisfaction. A combination was soon formed to ruin Schomberg and to deprive him of the offices he held; but Richelieu of course took no part therein, as the dissensions of his adversaries were sure to increase his strength.

The most active enemy of the grand master was the

marquis of Vieville, apparently a subtle unprincipled person, who imagined that he might, by skilful management, introduce himself into the long-unoccupied station of the king's favourite. His hatred towards Schomberg had a personal motive, that minister having deprived him of a pension which had been granted him; and he pursued the object of his destruction with eagerness and success. Not only by false statements and subtle insinuations did he persuade the monarch to deprive the count of the superintendence of finance; but he obtained the vacant post for himself, and was shortly after introduced into the privy council. His great support in all his proceedings had been derived from the chancellor; but no sooner had he gained his first object, than the next step he proposed to himself was the ruin of the man who had protected him.

Sillery and his son Puysieux had, unfortunately for themselves, opposed with honest zeal the king's long absence from the capital during the operations against the Huguenots; and Vieville soon found that to praise the conduct which they had ventured to blame was the ready way to gain the monarch's favour for himself, and at the same time to injure those whom he had determined to destroy. A fair excuse existed for the dismissal of the chancellor, whose age and infirmities rendered him unequal to many of the duties of his office; and, finding that his fate was decided in the mind of the king, he was induced to make a virtue of necessity, and resign what he could not retain. His son, however, remained in office some time longer; but an ague with which he was afflicted having prevented him from paying his usual court to the king, his fall was also soon determined. He had few friends and many enemies at the court, and amongst the latter the most formidable by skill, though not by rank, was the cardinal de Richelieu. That prelate, indeed, having little influence with the king, could not act openly against the man who had long opposed his elevation to the conclave; but he took care that all the power of the queen mother should be exerted to ruin

Puysieux, not fearing at all to raise too high the authority of Vieville, whose capacity he estimated at its real extent.

To the mind of Richelieu it must have been very evident that any ministry of which Vieville was the mainspring must very soon break to pieces, or call him into such a station that the management of all great affairs would soon fall into his hands. In the mean time he seemed to devote himself entirely to the care of the queen mother's interests; and, in pursuing some claims for money which the maréchal d'Ancre had invested at Florence, he had the good fortune at once to draw the attention of the king to his skill and address, to gratify the princess he served, and to return to the son of Concini some of those acts of kindness which he had met with from that favourite in his first steps at the court.

At length Puysieux, as well as his father, received his formal dismissal. The principal enemies of Richelieu were now removed, the ministry was weak and inefficient, the power of the queen mother was greatly increased, and on the 29th of April * the cardinal was again nominated to the council of state. His ecclesiastical rank gave him that precedence over the principal members of the council which he desired; and taking his seat opposite to the cardinal de Rochefoucault, he prepared to give new vigour and energy to all the acts of France, so as to fix his authority for the future upon the firm basis of national success. At the same time, however, he resolved at once to sweep the weak, though subtle and daring, Vieville from his path; and in the very first negotiations which ensued, found means to effect his ruin. That favourite who had showed some degree of caution ere his rise, seemed to suppose his power unlimited, and his authority unassailable, as soon as he found that the king submitted to the trammels in which he endeavoured to hold him. He signed orders, corresponded with ambassadors, agreed

* A. D. 1624.

to treaties, without the sanction of the monarch or the council ; and even conceived the rash and almost insane design of inducing the queen mother to dismiss her favourite, Richelieu, at the very moment that the cardinal was serving her with the greatest zeal and success. The queen, however, scoffed at his proposals, and only pressed the merits of Richelieu the more strongly upon the king's attention.

Louis, though less tender of the feelings of his present favourite than of any other who ever filled that contemptible station, did not fail to communicate to Vieville the praises of Richelieu which were constantly poured into his ear : and the marquis had the imprudence to reply that the cardinal was certainly a man of talents ; but, if he were to be intrusted with authority, the king would soon have to ask his mother's permission before he went out to hunt. The monarch was offended, and the queen still more so ; and every art was employed to work the fall of this rash favourite. Though daily losing ground in the esteem of the king, he still retained sufficient power to cause the recall of the count de Tillières, ambassador in England, who was then in the midst of those unfortunate negotiations which ended in the marriage of Charles I. with Henrietta of France, appointing in his place the marquis d'Effiat, a man of little skill or experience ; he also caused the temporary disgrace of Ornano, governor of the king's brother, the duke of Anjou. But these measures only added to his enemies ; and the bold step which he took immediately afterwards, of omitting an important article in the treaty of alliance between Charles and Henrietta, without the knowledge of the king or of the council, seems to have decided his fate. Louis himself, forgetting the sullen timidity of his nature, broke forth into reproaches against him so strong and decided, that Vieville spontaneously resigned the offices he held ; and a few days after he was arrested, and conducted to the castle of Amboise.

From that moment Richelieu assumed the entire

direction of the council, and his authority knew only a brief interruption till the end of his days. He had, however, before the fall of Vieville, shown that degree of skill and vigour in two important transactions which afforded a good preparation for the assumption of power. In the month of June, 1624, shortly after his appointment to the council, he had been named one of the commissioners appointed to treat with the lords Holland and Carlisle, ambassadors extraordinary from England to the court of France, in regard to the marriage already mentioned between Charles, prince of Wales, and Henrietta Maria; and his superiority to his colleagues was soon so apparent, that the principal points of the negotiations were all arranged by him. He quickly perceived, and was not slow to profit by the weak eagerness with which James I. and his son pursued their object; and, as is well known, he succeeded, by address and delay, in wringing from them terms but little creditable to English princes, ere he concluded a union which proved, as he probably divined, ruinous to England and advantageous to France.

The only difficulty of weight which obstructed his designs, was the opposition of the pope to a marriage between a catholic princess of France and the protestant son of the English king; but Richelieu met the subtleties of the nuncio, and cut short the delays of the pontiff, in a manner which Rome had not been accustomed to encounter; and notwithstanding all the opposition of Spain at the court of Rome, the pope at length was obliged to despatch the dispensation for the marriage in haste, lest the fearless cardinal should dispense with the papal permission altogether. Another transaction, indeed, was taking place at the same time which taught the conclave how little deference it was to expect from Richelieu in secular affairs, and how vigorously he had determined on all occasions to cut the Gordian knot of tortuous negotiations.

On pretence of protecting the catholic religion in the Valteline, menaced, as it appeared, by the protest-

ant Grisons, in whom the sovereignty of that territory was vested, the house of Austria had built a fortress called Fuentez in the midst of the country, and not long after added four other forts. The Grisons resisted ; and, while France, Switzerland, and Savoy negotiated and threatened, the Spaniards and Austrians put down the power of the Grisons by force, and took possession of that tract of country which gave a direct and secure communication between the Tyrol and the Milanese, thus uniting the German and Italian dominions of the house of Austria. The object of this proceeding could not be mistaken ; and a treaty was entered into between Venice, Savoy, and France, in the month of February, 1623, by which those three states bound themselves to raise a certain number of men for the purpose of reducing the Valteline to its former state. Austria became alarmed ; and in order both to strengthen the pretext under which she attempted to conceal her aggression, and divert the confederates from active efforts to deprive her of the advantage already gained, she gave up the fortresses of the Valteline into the hands of the pope ; secure of regaining them when any of those moments of supineness fell upon her adversaries which from time to time lull to sleep the energies of all nations. The confederates, however, were by no means satisfied, and threatened still to pursue their first purpose ; but Austria and Rome contrived to entangle them in the long negotiations which so often served the papal court as nets wherein to let the efforts of her most vigorous opponents exhaust themselves in ineffectual struggles with petty difficulties. Thus stood the transaction when Richelieu was admitted to the council of France ; and from that moment the aspect of affairs was changed. He menaced as former ministers had menaced ; but he did more—he began to act ; and when the papal nuncio remonstrated with him personally, asking how he, as a prelate of the church of Rome, could reconcile it to his conscience to make war against the head of that church, he at once defined the line between the spiritual and secular

dominion of the holy see, and intimated that he would be always ready to meet all her secular operations with secular means ; adding, that if the pope impugned this doctrine, he would have it supported by a hundred doctors of the Sorbonne.

So unusual had of late been such conduct, and so desirable was the possession of the Valteline, that the pontiff and the house of Austria did not believe that Richelieu would have recourse to arms, and still endeavoured to prolong the negotiations without abandoning the territory. Rapid preparations, however, were made ; and the marquis de Cœuvres, who had resided long as ambassador for France at the court of Rome, and had not retained much respect for the Holy See after close inspection of its movements, was appointed to lead an army through Switzerland into the contested territory. It is true, that this force was utterly insignificant in point of numbers ; but Cœuvres showed some skill in employing it to the best advantage. Obtaining permission in secret to pass through the protestant cantons of Switzerland, he did not attempt to gain the consent of the catholic cantons till he was in their territories, and had nearly traversed the district ere they could consider what reply to give to his demand. The Austrians had made no preparations to defend a territory which they considered quite secure under the mantle of the supreme pontiff ; the papal troops fled as soon as they beheld an enemy ; and in a very short space of time the greater part of the Valteline, together with the Austrian fortresses, fell into the hands of the French in the most bloodless manner.

The want of a sufficient force, and the scantiness of his resources, prevented the marquis de Cœuvres from carrying on his successes as far as he otherwise might have done. The pope at the same time remonstrated vehemently ; complaining as loudly of being deprived of a territory to which he had no pretensions, as if France had dismembered the portion of St. Peter ; and as the French general could proceed no farther, Louis

and his minister seemed to listen to the appeal of the Holy See, and granted a suspension of hostilities in the Valteline.

It would appear that Richelieu, from his first accession to power, meditated a war with both branches of the house of Austria. His personal motives might be to render himself necessary to the king, and to signalise his ministry by some great actions which would place it on a basis far more firm than any on which the influence of Louis's favourites had hitherto been founded; but, at the same time, the more extended views of the statesman showed him, that to snatch from the emperor and the king of Spain a portion of the immense power which they had accumulated in one family, was absolutely necessary to the safety of France, and of Europe. Three preparatory steps, however, were necessary, especially as it seemed expedient to render Italy the scene of hostilities: the first, was to weaken the power of Austria in that country; the second, to gain some footing therein for France; and the third, to insure that internal tranquillity which would favour foreign warfare. The conquest of the Valteline accomplished the first of these objects; for though the nature of the passes, and the position of the country, rendered it of little importance as an entrance into Italy, yet, whether it remained in the possession of France, or was restored to the Grisons, it insulated the Milanese, and embarrassed all the communications of the house of Austria. This, as we have seen, was accomplished without any direct rupture with Spain, as the troops driven out of the Valteline were Roman; and in order to attain the second object, another oblique path was pursued, which at once served to divert the Spanish forces from any attempt to recover the lost territory, and afforded a prospect of a firm basis for any future operations.

The duke of Savoy, as we have shown, was one of the parties to the treaty by which a French army occupied the Valteline; and by that treaty, while the Venetians aided their allies in obtaining and keeping that district,—

a stipulation which they observed but nominally,—the duke was to create a diversion in some other quarter. The side of Genoa was suggested; and a pretext was not wanting to excuse the duke's aggression on the Genoese state, nor a motive to render that aggression active and important. Zuccarello, an imperial fief, had been claimed for many ages by the house of Savoy, and had been also bought from the family of Caretto by the duke not many years before. The emperor, however, had declared the fief forfeited by Caretto, and had made it over to the Genoese republic, who remained in possession. For the recovery of this territory, then, the duke of Savoy proposed to declare war against Genoa; and, in a conference which ensued between him and the constable Lesdiguières, at Susa, in October, 1624, the views of all parties were explained, and comprehended the complete conquest and partition of the whole of the Genoese possessions in Italy.

Still the utmost care was taken to prevent this attack upon an ally of Austria from being construed into a direct breach of the very insecure peace that then existed between France and Spain, lest the attempt should prove unsuccessful, and it should become necessary for Louis to temporise any further ere he proceeded to direct hostilities against the latter country. In the first instance, the efforts of the allied armies were very successful, although the rash and headstrong Charles Emanuel, duke of Savoy, thwarted the wise and skilful plans of the old constable Lesdiguières, who commanded the French contingent. The whole of Liguria was overrun; the Genoese troops offered scarcely more resistance than the papal forces had done; the heads of the republic, as is too often the case, were found totally unprepared; and Genoa itself was upon the point of falling before the allied armies. The Austrian princes, however, showed a promptitude in favour of their neighbour which they seldom displayed on their own behalf. Spanish galleys filled the port, Austrian soldiers hastened to the town, the duke of Feria marched

from Milan with a very superior army ; and the duke of Savoy and the constable, who were now at open enmity with each other, were forced to retreat precipitately. All that had been acquired was lost as rapidly as it had been gained ; and it is probable that the allied army itself would have been annihilated had it not been for the skill and activity of Lesdiguières, who, in the eightieth year of his age, brought up the rear of the army, and covered the retreat of his less skilful coadjutor, in the face of a superior force.

Although the French and Spanish forces were thus brought into contact, yet, by one of those extraordinary paradoxes which are so often serviceable to politicians at their need, the peace between the two countries was not held to be violated by any thing that took place in the war of Genoa ; and the ambassador of Spain remained quietly at the court of France, while the soldiers of his sovereign were contending with the French armies in the field.

In the mean time the cardinal Barberin appeared in Paris as legate, charged to treat concerning the affairs of the Valteline and of Genoa ; but a young and inexperienced man of five-and-twenty was but little calculated to compete with Richelieu, especially when his powers were very limited, and when Spain disclaimed his interference. Nor, indeed, was he authorised to make any concessions on the part of the pope ; but was apparently directed simply to require the restitution of the Valteline, to threaten and to expostulate, still advancing, as the principal motive of the pontiff, the desire to protect the catholics of the disputed territory, and yet evading every proposal which insured them such protection under the sovereignty of the Grisons. With Richelieu, however, such proceedings could not be successful ; every attention and honour was shown to the legate, much reverence was professed for the Sec of Rome, but no concession was made except a farther suspension of hostilities in the Valteline, which was far more necessary to France than to Spain.

During the progress of these transactions other events had been taking place in France itself, which, together with the bad success of the attempt upon Genoa, caused a temporary delay in the execution of the cardinal's schemes against Spain. We have already seen the turbulent state of the French court after the death of Henry IV. ; the daring insolence of the nobles, and the more justifiable movements of the Huguenots; and there can be no doubt that Richelieu had not suffered his eyes to rest on such transactions without examining their causes, perceiving what would be their results, and considering the best means of putting an end to disorders which arose in the abused power of some classes, and tended to the ruin of the whole. Throughout his ministry we shall find one general plan pursued for crushing all resistance to the royal authority, on whatever ground it was raised; and the plan itself, as well as the means employed for executing it, speak strongly the arbitrary and despotic feelings of the man, though we cannot but acknowledge that there was great necessity for the intervention of a strong hand to regulate the disorganised state of France.

The voice of the people was, in that country and in those days, but little heard except in occasional tumults in the capital, and in cases of actual civil strife, when they chose their party with the rest, and afforded support to their favourite leader; but their rights, their happiness, and the means of improving their social condition, were but little considered, except by such monarchs as Henry IV. The principal bodies which Richelieu had to deal with were the great nobility, those fragments of the feudal system, the parliaments, and the Huguenots; and, with his personal ambition giving its peculiar character to his policy, he determined to crush them all. In regard to the nobles, there can be little doubt that the purpose of lessening their exuberant power, and binding them in the same bonds of civil order which restrained the rest of the people, was wise as well as bold; the nature of the means employed we shall have

to consider hereafter. In regard to the parliaments, too, which consisted, in fact, of the supreme courts in the capital, and which possessed a right of registering the decrees of the king before they became law, Richelieu had some cause for the severe measures which he exercised towards those assemblies. It is true that, in claiming the liberty of examining, discussing, and commenting upon the decrees of the king, they attributed to themselves nothing but what common sense accorded to them ; for what was the use of submitting decrees for their registration if they were not to be considered ? any common clerk could transcribe them in a book, and it was absurd to employ for such a purpose the whole parliament of Paris. But, on the other hand, the parliaments had too often lent themselves to faction ; had too often supported and promoted the greatest disorders ; had too often been the tools of every demagogue and every rebel. Their constitution, as it then existed, was not such as to offer any guarantee for their consulting solely the good of the country ; and had Richelieu endeavoured to change them instead of trampling upon them, he might have created a barrier which would have opposed the torrent that in after ages swept away the throne itself. But Richelieu's nature was too despotic, and his ambition too selfish, to admit of his seeking remote benefits for the people or the monarchy at the expense of any part of his power at the time. He crushed the nobles who had formed the bulwark between the king and the people, and he created nothing better in place of the bad barrier he removed. The huguenots were even more objectionable in his eyes than the nobles or the parliaments, because they had justice on their side, and the sympathy of all who loved justice throughout Europe. They formed, it is true, a state within the state ; they had amongst them their own nobles, their own leaders, their own magistrates ; they possessed their own towns, their own fleets, their own armies ; and were united in a bond of union which gave energy to small means. Such a state

of things could not of course be suffered to exist ; but there were two ways of putting an end thereunto. The first was, to do them justice ; to fulfil all that had been promised by the edict of Nantes, and to leave them in that repose which would soon have reduced them to insignificance. The second was, to take from them the means of defence, and deprive them of the privileges they had obtained.

Richelieu resolved to follow the latter course ; and perhaps this determination might be founded upon one or two political reasons, distinct from the despotic tendency of his mind, and a natural fondness for severe and uncompromising measures. In the first place, the opposite course would have been most dangerous to himself. His proceedings in regard to the Valteline had already called upon him the hatred of all zealous catholics ; the papal nuncio had branded him more than once with the name of protector of heretics ; the immense influence he had acquired was not viewed without jealousy by those who remembered him totally destitute of authority ; and a strong party seemed likely to be formed against him, supported by the papal power, cemented by religious fanaticism, and led by the prince of Condé, who had not appeared at the court since the treaty of Montpellier had given a temporary peace to the protestants of France. Richelieu had also to remember that he was a cardinal of the Roman church. The mind of the king was much under the control of the catholic priests ; the great body of the nation were of that persuasion ; and it was not difficult to perceive that he could not hope to do such full and complete justice to the protestants of France as to insure their submission and support, without raising up against himself a party more powerful than had ever before opposed a French minister. On the other hand, it was necessary to the stability of his power to signalise his ministry by great efforts of some kind. By finally crushing the protestants of France, he put an end to the charge of protecting heretics ; he annihilated the

rising party of the catholics by cutting the bond that united them ; he freed himself from the huguenots, who occupied the troops and divided the energies of the state, and he left himself at liberty to pursue the great scheme of external and internal policy, on which the continuance of his authority was to be founded.

Difficulties, it is true, were opposed to him even here ; for though he could count upon great support from the French nobility in his operations against the huguenots, yet his external enemies watched with eager eyes the internal dissensions of France, and were always ready to give a certain degree of aid to any one in that country who employed the forces of the crown by intestine strife. Thus his operations against the huguenots could not be so consistent and sustained as the firm determined nature of his own character prompted. On the admission of Richelieu to the council, the peace of Montpellier was still unbroken, but several of the stipulations in favour of the protestants had been openly violated, while others remained unexecuted. Amongst the rest, a fort called Louis, built to restrain the huguenot city of Rochelle, and which the king had promised to demolish, remained untouched and fully garrisoned. The Rochellois, instead of waiting patiently till external circumstances combined to enforce their demands for the execution of this article of the treaty, endeavoured, after various remonstrances, to do justice to themselves ; attacked the fort without success ; and sent out a fleet under their great leader, Soubise, in order to capture such a number of vessels as to induce the king to accomplish his promise for the purpose of recovering them. Soubise easily made himself master of six ships of war, which he carried into Rochelle ; and, not satisfied with this first success, landed on the isle of Oleron, near the mouth of the Gironde, and with little opposition took possession of that important post.

This occurred in the beginning of January, 1625 ; and at the same time some other movements of the

protestants in the south, under the duc de Rohan, caused no small alarm at the court of France. No operations, however, of any great importance were directed against the insurgents, though the king, on the 25th of January, declared, by a decree and proclamation, Soubise, Rohan, and all who took part with them, to be guilty of high treason ; but the troops already in the southern provinces were found sufficient to keep the protestants in check ; and the two principal leaders of the insurrection, meeting with some reverses, and seeing little prospect of any great success, sent deputies voluntarily to Paris, and made their peace with the court.

The proposal for a fresh treaty with the Rochellois was at that moment 'by no means disagreeable to Richelieu ; for the huguenot deputies arrived in Paris precisely at the time that disastrous news was pouring in from Piedmont, showing the retreat of the allied armies from Genoa, and the advance of the Spaniards to succour that republic. The papal legate also was then at the French court ; and the successes of Spain, as well as the revolt of the huguenots, rendered his demands concerning the Valteline more peremptory and unjust. A favourable treaty, however, was immediately granted to the protestant leaders, notwithstanding the opposition of the legate and the nuncio ; but the Rochellois unwisely attacked, during the negotiation, the French and Dutch fleet, which had been collected to oppose them ; and hostilities can scarcely be said to have ceased on either side, ere they were recommenced with more fury than ever. The duc de Montmorency had by this time taken the command of the French fleet ; and, under pretence of not being accustomed to the sea service, he placed himself on board the ship of the Dutch admiral, who, having been hired to assist the catholic king of France against his revolted subjects, was supposed to act but unwillingly against his fellow protestants. The presence of Montmorency, however, insured greater vigour ; and an English squadron having

been disgracefully sent to the assistance of the French court, a series of operations were commenced, which nearly destroyed the fleet of the Rochellois, deprived them of the isles of Oleron and Rhé, and compelled the prince de Soubise to seek refuge with a few ships in the English ports.

These reverses reduced the protestants of Rochelle to despair; and in November they despatched deputies in haste to Paris, to pray the clemency of the king, and to ask once more for terms of pacification. They were now, however, treated with haughtiness and severity; and the conditions offered were such as would have left them totally without defence or security for the future. At the same time some insolent and imperious messages were sent to Charles I. of England, demanding greater toleration^p for the catholics of this country, the execution of all the weak concessions which had been made by James and his son in their eagerness for the French marriage, the expulsion of Soubise from the English territory, the delivery of his ships to the French admiral, and permission to pursue the vessels of rebels into the ports of England. This was more than the patience of Charles would bear; and the policy of the court of this country changed towards France from that moment.

About the same time that the haughty demands of the French king were received in England, a deputation from the unfortunate inhabitants of Rochelle also reached the British capital; and the result of their present application to England for aid in their distress was very apparent from the tone assumed by the deputies which were shortly after despatched to Paris, in order to bear the reply of the huguenots to the conditions offered by Richelieu. To those conditions, the representatives of the Rochellois refused to accede; and on maréchal Schomberg telling them that if the king treated^v them as they deserved, he would hang them, they prepared to depart from the court. But very shortly after this angry speech had been spoken, tidings were received at the French court

which greatly changed the face of affairs. The protestants in other parts of France began to rise in support of the Rochellois; and a fortified town upon the Rhone fell into their hands, by which the commerce on that river was nearly ruined. The huguenots of Gascony and Languedoc made demonstrations of a general revolt; and England not only prepared to give the insurgents effectual aid, but demanded that the vessels which had been lent to France should be instantly returned to English ports. At the same time the Spanish and the papal court made preparations for the recovery of the Valteline, the cardinal Barberini was despatched with great pomp, as legate to Spain; and every thing indicated that efforts were being used to form a general league against France, in the south of Europe, while she was embarrassed by internal dissensions, and threatened with war from the side of England.

In order to set his foreign negotiations free from the disadvantages under which they laboured while a considerable part of France was known by all the adverse courts to be in an actual state of revolt, and several of the most important provinces of the south on the eve of insurrection, Richelieu at once changed his conduct towards the huguenots, and pretending to be moved by the representations of the duc de la Tremouille, who had relations at the time within the walls of La Rochelle, renewed the negotiations with the protestant deputies, and granted terms infinitely more favourable than they probably expected. Each party hastened eagerly to sign the treaty*, which was followed by an edict of the king, strengthening and confirming its provisions. All was joy and satisfaction amongst the protestants; and Richelieu hastened to take advantage of the interval of internal repose, in order to treat advantageously with the powers that sur-

* Feb. 5. 1626 -- Richelieu skilfully avoided signing the treaty with his own hand; and having persuaded the cardinal de Rochefoucault that, as prelates of the church of Rome, they could not put their signature to an act in favour of heretics, they withdrew from the council together, when the articles of pacification were brought in.

rounded him. The catholics of France, it is true, clamoured loudly against his lenity towards heretics, and the signs of a new faction rising against him were apparent; but the secret of Richelieu's views were betrayed by himself in a conversation which he held with the nuncio some time previous to the signature of the treaty with the protestants, when, after expressing the real hatred which he felt towards the huguenots, he added, "and yet I must scandalise the world once more before I crush them."

The general features of his scheme for the next few years undoubtedly were, first to obtain temporary tranquillity at home, for the purpose of concluding advantageous treaties with all other countries whose affection for France was doubtful; then as soon as those treaties were obtained, and he was sheltered under them from external interruption, to crush the last seeds of faction in France; and then to turn the whole power of the country he now governed with absolute authority to work the depression of the house of Austria. In order to secure the Valteline against the enterprises of the papal or Spanish troops, Bassompierre was despatched to Switzerland, and in spite of all opposition obtained from the cantons a thorough recognition of the right of the Grisons to the sovereignty of the disputed territory. At the same time the count du Fargis was busily employed in treating with the count duke Olivarez, in order to conclude a separate arrangement with that crown before the influence of Rome made itself felt through the new legate. The negotiations were carefully concealed from Venice and Savoy, and had proceeded to an advanced stage during the insurrection of the Rochellois; As long as the intention of subduing the protestants at once remained in force, Richelieu urged the ambassador in Spain to proceed as rapidly as possible, passing over all minor points so long as the sovereignty of the Valteline was assured to the Grisons, and the Spaniards withdrew their claim to a free passage through those valleys from the Tyrol to the Milanese. No sooner, however, was

internal tranquillity restored to France; than the minister became more exacting, and despatched orders to Du Fargis to proceed with the greatest caution. That ambassador, however, had already advanced so far, that he judged it impossible to retract, and eventually signed the treaty which contained the two principal stipulations formerly demanded, and transmitted it to France for approval. Richelieu affected or felt the greatest surprise at the precipitation of the ambassador, declared that he had exceeded his commission, and returned the treaty with a number of corrections, which he demanded should be made therein by the court of Spain.

Some of these new demands were granted, others refused, and Du Fargis again signed the amended treaty. Richelieu once more declared that he did so without authority; but it was generally supposed that the cardinal, to veil the duplicity which he had shown towards the duke of Savoy and the Venetian republic, cast the blame of precipitancy upon the ambassador, who was in fact fully empowered; and a curious piece of deceit practised in regard to the date of the corrected treaty confirmed these suspicions. The treaty retained the original date of Monzon, 16th of March, though in fact it was signed at Barcelona many weeks after; but the legate having arrived in the mean time, it was determined thus to conceal from him that the negotiation had been concluded without his participation, even while he was in Spain.

By this treaty all parties but the cardinal himself and the pope were sufferers. The Grisons were deprived of a great part of their power in the Valteline, the Venetians were totally neglected, the duke of Savoy left at the mercy of his adversaries, and the protestants of the disputed territory were forced to quit their lands on account of religious disabilities. None of the parties thus injured, however, had the power of doing aught to disturb the proceedings of Richelieu in France; and temporary relief from all external calls upon his attention had by this time been rendered necessary to the minister by

an event which must now be noticed. This was the famous conspiracy of Chalais, which, while it served to display the art, the vigour, the baseness, the daring, and the discernment of Richelieu, in the most extraordinary manner, tended to establish his inordinate power on a basis which it could never otherwise have obtained.

The person from whom this conspiracy derived its name in history, and who, though not the principal instigator of the attempt itself, was the principal means of its discovery, and at once the tool and the victim of both parties, was the marquis de Chalais, master of the king's wardrobe. He was a man of considerable personal graces and insinuating manners, but rash, incautious, and irresolute. It does not appear that the minister had ever shown him any personal enmity; but, according to the court scandal of the day, Chalais was the successful rival of Richelieu in the favour of the beautiful, witty, and unprincipled duchess of Chevreuse. Richelieu might conceal his resentment under such circumstances, but was not likely to forget it. Opportunity of vengeance was not long ere it presented itself; and though it accorded well with other schemes, there is much reason to believe that revenge had its share in all that followed as well as policy.

Gaston of France, duke of Aujou, the king's only brother, had received his education from the hands of men differing from each other in every point and principle, as much as it is possible to conceive. His first governor was De Breves, a man of virtue and experience, who soon led his pupil forward to a point of distinction that gave umbrage to the favourites of the young king, and afforded matter of jealousy to the weak monarch himself. He was consequently removed; and Luines, who was at that time in favour, appointed to the high office, thus vacant, the well-known count de Lude, debauched, unprincipled, and idle, who either cast the burden of the prince's instruction upon men totally unfitted for any thing but to teach him low and evil habits, or applied himself to win his love by leading

him to the licentious pleasure in which he himself indulged. This course of bad instruction lasted about two years, when, De Lude dying, an officer, named Ornano, was appointed to succeed him, and applied himself to change once more the direction of the prince's mind. Ornano seems to have been a man of considerable capacity, but ambitious and violent. He gained, however, completely the affection and respect of his pupil, counteracted some of the evils of his earlier education, and endeavoured to direct his efforts towards nobler objects than had hitherto engrossed his attention. Unfortunately, however, with a view to his own interests, Ornano also tried to lead forward in the path of ambition a prince the least fitted by nature to tread the dangerous ascent to power at a time when all the avenues were closed by the colossal mind of Richelieu. Had there been no other motive for dissuading Gaston from such an attempt, a cogent one would have been found in his continual vacillation of purpose, which proceeded probably partly from a natural defect, but which had been partly induced by the frequent changes in his system of education. Ornano, however, suggested to him, in the year 1624, while the marquis de Vieville was still in favour, to solicit admission to the privy council; and Vieville, perceiving at whose instigation the demand was made, dismissed and imprisoned the prince's governor, on which a fourth was added to the list of his instructors.

Vieville having fallen, Ornano was reinstated in his charge, created marshal in the French army, and now, in the height of Richelieu's influence, once more attempted to force the duke of Anjou into the council. The minister little feared, it is true, the presence of the weak prince amongst the counsellors of the king; but he did apprehend more from the authority which might thereby be gained by the stern, talented, and free-spoken Ornano. The prince, therefore, so long as he and his governor pressed the point, met with a direct refusal; but as soon as they seemed to abandon it, Richelieu advised the mon-

arch to grant him, of his free grace, that which he had seemed so much to desire, alleging that such a step might withdraw him from the intrigues into which disappointment was plunging him. Ornano unwisely displayed some anger at this proceeding, and next petitioned that he himself might be admitted to the council, and when that was refused, sought to accompany the duke thither, in quality of tutor. It was probable that the minister had by this time determined to work the fall of Ornano, and now took measures to irritate him to the commission of criminal acts, or at all events to such as might bear that construction. Ornano had, amongst other things, endeavoured to obtain for the king's brother the command of the royal armies, which had been also refused; and on that very demand, Richelieu had raised up, in the mind of the weak and suspicious monarch, a host of doubts in regard to the plans and purposes of the prince and his governor, which they foolishly confirmed by the cabals and intrigues into which they entered for the purpose of rendering themselves more powerful at the court.

At length, on the king's distinct refusal to admit the marshal d'Ornano to the council in any shape, that officer expressed himself in such a manner as to give high offence to the monarch; and two days after he was arrested at Fontainebleau with several others, and conducted to Vincennes. The duke, on this news, hastened to the council, full of indignation and reproaches, and meeting with the chancellor d'Aligre, demanded angrily if he had advised the king to imprison his friend and preceptor. D'Aligre timidly denied that he had been at the meeting of the council where the act was determined; and the duke, turning to Richelieu, made the same demand. Richelieu replied boldly that he, as well as the chancellor, had advised the arrest of Ornano; and shortly after, D'Aligre lost the seals in consequence of the weakness which he showed on the present occasion. The duke of Anjou, however, did not fail to strive hard for the liberation of his favourite; but the very cagerness

and impetuosity which he displayed only the more alarmed the king, and drew the bonds tighter round the prisoner.

Intrigues of a more criminal nature succeeded, and vague rumours of a design to assassinate Richelieu became current at the court. That such a design really existed there can be very little doubt; but the cardinal was always ready to derive advantage from the faults or crimes of his adversaries; and retiring to his country house of Limours, he wrote to the king, beseeching his permission to resign the functions which exposed him to so much enmity and danger. The young and weak monarch was at that moment in the midst of the difficulties and apprehensions, which the violence and intrigues of his brother had occasioned; and the fear of losing his minister at that moment induced him to write a letter to Richelieu, such as probably was never before or since addressed by a king to a subject, entreating him to return to his service in the most abject terms, and promising to betray to him every word which was spoken to his disadvantage, by whomsoever it was uttered.

From Limours, Richelieu proceeded to Fleury, and there the first direct discovery of the conspiracy against his person took place. The imprudent marquis de Chalais, finding himself alone at Fontainebleau with the commander De Valençay, ventured to solicit the aid of that officer in the destruction of the minister, and informed him that nine persons, of whom he himself was one, friends of the duke of Anjou and the maréchal d'Ornano, had arranged a plan for the assassination of the cardinal at Fleury in the course of the next day. The duke of Anjou himself was to be a principal actor in the tragedy; and by daylight the following morning he was to send a number of his attendants forward to Fleury, upon pretence of preparing dinner for him at that place. The conspirators, with as many companions as they could collect, were to follow; and the cardinal was to be put to death as soon as the

number of his adversaries was sufficient to overpower, his own attendants.

De Valençay listened till the whole plot was disclosed, and then burst forth into reproaches against Chalais for having entered into such a conspiracy, holding as he did a high station in the household of the king. Not only refusing to take any part therein himself, the commander insisted that Chalais should immediately reveal the whole design to the cardinal, threatening to inform the king at once if there were any hesitation. Chalais, terrified to find himself thus irretrievably committed, yielded to the menaces and persuasions of his friend ; and, mounting their horses, they rode off with all speed to Fleury, and made a complete disclosure to Richelieu of the design upon his life.

Richelieu heard the tale calmly, and gave praises and thanks both to Chalais and De Valençay for their information, directing them at the same time to return to Fontainebleau, and make the same disclosure to the king. He also charged Chalais strictly to conceal from the conspirators that he had betrayed them, and to keep up the same correspondence with them as before. Prompt measures were immediately taken by the king for the cardinal's security ; and, as had been announced, on the following morning the officers and attendants of the duke of Anjou began to make their appearance at Fleury, alleging that they came to prepare dinner for the prince, who intended to take a day's pleasure there. The plot, however, was not yet sufficiently mature for Richelieu's purpose, and, therefore, affecting to believe them, he instantly gave them up the house ; and, with a strong guard, for fear of danger by the way, proceeded to Fontainebleau. On his arrival he at once hastened to the apartments of the duke of Anjou, who had not yet risen, and in ironical terms reproached him for not having notified his intention of dining at Fleury, assuring the prince that he would have done his best to receive him properly. It became apparent to the conspirators,

from the proceedings which the minister adopted, that their design was discovered, and Richelieu is said to have given out that he had received intimation thereof from abroad; but the duke of Anjou and his friends were soon informed by Chalais himself of his indiscretion and infidelity, and with many vows and protestations of better conduct for the future, he was again admitted into their confidence.

Weakly supposing that he could deceive the crafty minister into whose power he had so completely cast himself, Chalais now joined zealously in the designs of the conspirators; and the plot was suffered by Richelieu, who found means of discovering all the details, to mature and spread itself undisturbed, till it comprehended almost all the great nobles whom he had cause to fear. The grand prior, the duke of Vendôme, the count of Soissons, the marquis of la Valette, the duke of Épernon, the duke of Longueville, and the duchess of Chevreuse, were all more or less implicated. At length, in the month of May, 1626, the court removed to Blois, and the intrigue proceeded so rapidly, and had extended so far, that Richelieu found it would be necessary to cut it short very soon. The great majority of the conspirators, from being allied by blood to the king, were sheltered from the extreme of Richelieu's vengeance; and it is curious to see how he portioned out, according to his own individual interests and passions, the fate of the men whom he now held in his power. The duke of Anjou, from whose combined weakness and turbulence the cardinal probably anticipated many a fruitless conspiracy at an after period, was now to be bought to abandon and betray his companions, and to be placed in such a situation as to give him full scope for entangling future courtiers in similar schemes. The duke of Vendôme and his brother, dangerous from their rank, their relationship to the monarch, and a certain portion of talent possessed by each, were to be arrested and stripped of their dignities; the duchess of Chevreuse was to be banished from the

court ; several others who were absent were to be kept for ever from the ear of the king by the terror of punishment for their share in this conspiracy ; and the weak Chalais was once more to be made the means of betraying all his confederates into the hands of their keen adversary, and then to end his life upon the scaffold. All these designs succeeded. The duke of Vendôme indeed was absent in his government of Brittany ; but his brother, the grand prior, was easily induced, by the prospect of being appointed high admiral, to persuade him to visit the court at Blois ; and after having been treated with high distinction for a day or two, they were both arrested in bed during the night, and conveyed to the castle of Amboise. At this bold act the duke of Anjou became alarmed, and prepared to fly with his friends to Metz : but the duke of Epemon and his son, the marquis of la Valette, who were not so deeply implicated in the conspiracy as others, took warning in time ; and la Valette, who commanded in Metz, refused to receive the prince in that fortress. Richelieu also, who had need of the weak duke, used means to quiet, and keep him at the court, by various promises ; and having determined to deprive the duke of Vendôme of the government of Brittany, he led the court to Nantes, apparently only waiting for some favourable accident to consummate the last act of the tragedy of Chalais.

Imprudent ever, Chalais confided to one of his acquaintances the advice he had given to the duke of Anjou to fly from the court while he could, and destroy the minister before Richelieu had ruined every great noble in the kingdom. This was again revealed, with many other particulars, to the count de Louvigny, an enemy of the unfortunate Chalais, who instantly carried the tidings to the king. Louis was easily made to believe that the master of his wardrobe entertained the design of poisoning him at the instigation of the duke of Anjou. Chalais was arrested ; and the duke, between the fear of such a charge being brought against himself

and the prospect of immense advantages held out to him by the cardinal, was easily induced to betray his unfortunate friend. As soon as his inclination to act this base part was discovered, he was led rapidly on to it by the execution of many of the promises which had been made him. His long-desired marriage with the rich heiress of Montpensier was instantly concluded; he received as his appanage the duchies of Orleans and Chartres and the county of Blois; and in the midst of the rejoicings on the signing of the marriage-contract, he basely made a written declaration * of the designs of Chalais, which could only lead that unfortunate man to the scaffold.

The desire of gratifying his vengeance, however, was not unaccompanied in the breast of Richelieu by a view to the extension of his power and to the attainment of future objects. The guilt of Chalais was so clear that no one of the ordinary tribunals of France would have hesitated to pronounce his condemnation; but Richelieu greedily seized this opportunity to create a precedent for a new and dangerous tribunal, which he easily foresaw might be infinitely useful to him in after times for the destruction of enemies whose criminality was more doubtful. For this purpose he established at Nantes what was called a chamber of justice, confiding the presidency thereof to the keeper of the seals; and on this evil institution founded those special commissions and other extraordinary and temporary tribunals which scarcely left a shadow of justice or liberty in the land.

Finding himself betrayed by his master, and deserted by his friends, with all his papers in the hands of a man who boasted that two lines of any one's handwriting would afford means to ruin him, Chalais at first took the resolution of refusing to answer any of the many questions which were now addressed to him less with the purpose of entangling him individually, as his condemnation was already decided, than with a

* 11th Aug. 1626.

view to implicate others. At length, however, he suddenly changed his conduct, and made a complete confession in answer to the questions of Richelieu, which confession tended so directly to realise the views of the minister, was so improbable in many of its circumstances, and was so strangely and suddenly opposed to the determination which he had at first evinced, that it was generally believed to have been drawn up by Richelieu himself, and pronounced by the unhappy Chalais under promise of pardon and advancement. That pardon was never extended to him; and he was condemned and executed without delay.

The declaration of Chalais, however, in the hands of Richelieu, was quite sufficient to place all that minister's enemies in his power; and while he contented himself by holding it in terror over the heads of many, in order to keep them at a distance from the court, he made it the vehicle of publicly insulting the young queen Anne of Austria, and the means of giving the king that aversion and distrust towards her which he thenceforth showed to the end of his life. No children had hitherto proceeded from the royal marriage; and in the declaration of Chalais it appeared that one of the objects of the conspiracy had been to declare the king impotent, to confine him in a monastery, and marrying the duke of Anjou to his brother's wife, to place him on the throne of the deposed monarch. This scheme was so absurd in conception, and would have been found so impracticable in execution, that no one believed it ever to have existed, except the weak monarch, who knew that an idle prediction had promised the crown to the duke of Anjou. The young queen, however, was, upon no other ground than that afforded by the words of Chalais, brought before the council while the indecent details of his declaration were read, and was then reproached and threatened by the king on account of plans in which there was not the slightest probability of her having taken any part.

The count de Soissons was now the only person of note

who was directly implicated, and who had not yet felt the power of the cardinal ; but he was fortunately in Paris at the time, and hearing of the event of the conspiracy, and that he himself was charged with having advised the duke of Anjou to retire to Rochelle and put himself at the head of the huguenot rebels, he wisely thought it best to follow the steps of the prince of Condé, and seek security in Italy. This answered all the purposes of the cardinal as far as the count was concerned ; for Richelieu, in his first efforts to depress the great nobility, and to keep every influential voice at a distance from the king's ear, did not fail to remember that by too great severity he might call upon himself the indignant reprobation of all Europe, and provoke resistance instead of only exciting fear. About the same time, the maréchal d'Ornano died in Vincennes, and rumour did not fail to attribute his death to poison. There seems, however, not to have been the slightest ground for such a suspicion. A well authenticated account of his last moments was current, in which, after acknowledging that he and many others had incited the duke of Anjou to an attempt to moderate the excessive power of Richelieu, he denied in the most solemn manner any participation in the more criminal schemes which were mentioned in the declaration of Chalais, and intimated that he did not believe they had ever really existed.

Before returning to Paris, the king assembled the states of Brittany, and formally deprived the duke of Vendôme of the government of that province. That high post, thus rendered vacant, was bestowed, at the request of Richelieu, upon the maréchal de Themines, greatly to the surprise of all who remembered that the sons of that personage had, but a few years before, killed the elder brother of the cardinal in a duel. The king's brother now assumed the title of duke of Orleans, and, being tenderly loved by the queen-mother, received also many distinctions from the hand of the minister. It may be doubted, indeed, whether all the graces showered upon the head of the duke of Orleans after

the fall of Chalais entirely proceeded from the gratitude of Richelieu to his former patroness, or from regard for that prince himself, inasmuch as every step forward which the duke now took only served to increase the jealousy with which the king regarded him. He was, however, appointed president of the assembly of notables, which was held in the end of the year 1626, for the purpose of providing some remedy for the disordered state of the finances of the kingdom.

On this occasion, a very luminous and important memoir was drawn up, it is supposed, by the marquis d'Effiat, giving the first clear statement of the revenues and disbursements of France which the people had seen for many years; and by this document, and the discussions which then took place, attention is called to three curious points regarding the history of France, which can only be touched upon briefly here. In the first place, we find that though Henry IV. had, with wisdom and caution, contrived to limit his expenditure to his revenue, and even to accumulate a treasure of seven millions of livres, those who had succeeded him had not only spent all that he had saved, but had already incurred a debt of more than fifty millions. We next learn, that in the collection of the taxes called *tailles* nearly 23,000 persons were employed, swallowing up two thirds of the receipts; and that of the produce of the gabelle one third was spent in charges ere it reached the hands of the king. The third point of great interest connected with these proceedings is the means which had been employed to supply the deficiency of the revenue, which did not amount to one half of the ordinary annual disbursements. These means were the most corrupt, debasing, and extraordinary that ever yet disgraced any administration. Not only were all posts and places in the army, at the bar, on the bench, and in the household, sold and bought, as a marketable commodity, every man having purchased one retaining the right to dispose of it again; but innumerable posts and offices, of all kinds, had been created for the express purpose of

sale. This whole system was neither more nor less than that of borrowing small sums of money at enormous interest, and, as a security to the lenders, putting the property, the lives, and the happiness of all the people, and the welfare and safety of the state, into the hands of those persons, competent or incompetent, who could afford to pay for their offices. The assembly of the notables tended in no degree to relieve the state, or benefit the people; and its only effect was to take from Richelieu the responsibility of creating more posts, and decreeing fresh imposts. This the notables seemed very willing to do; and the assembly, after promising great things to the country, which were never fulfilled, broke up in the end of February, 1627.

Such an occasion was seldom suffered to pass by Richelieu without the attainment of some personal object; for his own interests as a private individual, and his ambition as a statesman, always walked hand in hand. The danger he had incurred at Fleury, and the conspiracy of Chalais, afforded sufficient grounds for obtaining from the king a guard for his person, which he undoubtedly desired and procured, though he affected to be adverse to a proceeding which placed him, in one respect at least, on a level with the monarch himself. In the next place, he obtained an edict from the king, giving him entrance into the parliament, and a deliberative voice in that assembly, not only upon general questions, but in regard to private causes. In the edict he is merely styled prime minister; but about the same time a new office was created in his favour. The office of Admiral, indeed, had been suppressed; but many of the functions, and much of the authority of that post, were transferred to Richelieu, under the titles of grand master, chief, and superintendent-general of the navigation and commerce of France.

In the mean time, while Richelieu thus subjected all things in the realm to his will, and prepared himself to pursue the greater schemes he had conceived, over the ruins of the factions which opposed him, another storm

was threatening to assail him from without. The people of England had never been very favourably disposed to the union between their monarch and France: they had seen the queen's household composed of foreigners and Roman catholics with jealousy and apprehension; and they had heard of the ships of their nation uniting to crush their protestant brethren in France with wrath and indignation. The king's favourite, however, Buckingham, had long supported the French interests in the cabinet of Charles; but by this time a change of feelings had taken place in the bosom of the duke. He had, it seems, received some personal mortifications from the court of France*, and entertained a degree of individual enmity towards Richelieu. His anger was adroitly increased, there is reason to believe, by the abbé Scaglia, an emissary of that duke of Savoy who had been so completely duped, and then abandoned, by the cardinal; and the king of France having positively refused to receive Buckingham at his court, to negotiate the arrangement of some difficulties which had occurred between the two countries, the favourite of the English king hurried his master on to a war with France, in support of the Rochellois.

The exiled duke of Soubize was also still in England, and he left no effort unemployed to obtain substantial aid from the English crown, in favour of his fellow protestants. The actual commencement of hostilities began without any declaration of war; and, after several negotiations had been carried on between Rochelle and London, in private, the English monarch gave orders for seizing some larger French vessels then in his ports. Reprisals were instantly made on the part

* Louis had more than once refused to receive him as ambassador from England. The cause of this aversion on the part of the king of France towards his brother-in-law's favourite is boldly stated by many contemporary writers to have been expressions of somewhat more than chivalrous gallantry towards the young queen Anne of Austria. The duke of Rohan evidently points at these rumours when he declares, that Buckingham's desire of returning to France originated in "quelques folles amours," (Mem. de Rohan, lib. iv.).

of France ; but still negotiations were continued on both sides ; and, in the mean while, the Rochellois hastened their preparations, to be in readiness to co-operate with the English sent to their support. They had, it is true, much reason to complain ; for, trusting to the last convention, they had begun, and nearly completed, the demolition of several of their forts, expecting daily to see the fort Louis, which had been erected at their very gates, rased, according to the stipulations of their treaty. So far from those stipulations being executed, however, by the king, the fort remained in its original condition, and important fortifications were commenced in the Isle de Ré.*

At length the preparations on the part of England could no longer be overlooked, and measures were taken to oppose any descent which might be made on the French coast. The mouth of the Garonne, and the shores of Poitou and Saintonge, as affording the most direct means of establishing a communication with the protestants, were looked upon as the points likely to be attacked ; and thither were the royal levies directed, while the king himself prepared to advance from the capital, and place himself at the head of his army.

At the same time, however, active measures were taken by the protestants of Languedoc both to reinforce their friends in the west, and to create a powerful diversion in their favour ; and the angry duke of Savoy † promised aid and support as soon as the English should have effected their landing. Every thing, therefore, threatened a severe and obstinate civil war ; but it is probable that Richelieu, who knew the many weaknesses of his adversaries, beheld, with the exulting anticipation of fresh success, the preparations made against him.

In the mean while some domestic events which took place in the royal family prepared the way for occurrences of greater public importance. The young duchess of Orleans now approached the period of her

* Mem. de Bassompierre.

† Mem. de Rohan, lib. iv.

confinement ; and while the queen-mother and the duke looked forward with anxiety and joy to the birth of an heir to the throne, the childless king waited in envious irritation till his brother's wife was delivered of a daughter. This event relieved his mind for the time, but in five days after the birth of her child the duchess died ; and the queen-mother soon began to speak of seeking a new alliance for her youngest son. Louis, however, was deeply offended at the very thought ; and the after-conduct of Richelieu renders it not improbable that he took care to cultivate the first seeds of dissension between the weak monarch and his mother, having himself made all the use of her influence that was necessary to his own advancement ; and being quite ready to deprive her of any share of that power which he was determined to possess entire. The queen, however, who was ambitious also, pursued her object, and endeavoured to bring about a marriage between the duke of Orleans and one of the daughters of her own ducal house of Tuscany, over whom she hoped to have great influence in case of the death of the king without heirs. These proceedings caused a renewal of coldness between Louis and his mother ; and the public events which took place only served to increase his jealousy of the duke of Orleans, and his wrath at the proceedings of the queen in that prince's favour.

When about to set out for the army, in the end of June, the king suddenly fell ill, and having persisted in pursuing his journey, was compelled, by the violence of the fever, to stop at Villeroi. The duke, who had been appointed lieutenant-general of the armies of France under the king, instantly hastened forward to take the supreme command during the illness of his brother, very well satisfied at the independent power which had thus fallen into his hands ; but at Saumur he was overtaken by messengers, commanding him to halt ; and nothing but the reiterated entreaties of his mother could obtain for him permission to con-

tinue his journey. For some time, while the king appeared in danger, the situation of Richelieu was very perilous; and it is probable that the wishes of the duke of Orleans did not meet with the same decided opposition at that moment which they would otherwise have encountered at his hands. In the mean time, however, the danger of the state became pressing. The king lay, unable to proceed; the protestants of the south began to show symptoms of insurrection in favour of the Rochellois; the duke de Rohan was already in arms; the count of Soissons*, fearing and feared by the court, was in Piedmont, where the duke of Savoy, now rendered an enemy instead of a friend, menaced the French frontier, and an English fleet and army, commanded by the duke of Buckingham, was already off Rochelle.

The skill and energy of the cardinal, however, met all difficulties at once; and comprehending, with the keen glance of policy, all the weak points in the situation and the character of his adversaries, he prepared to assail them where they were most vulnerable. He held out to the people of Rochelle the prospect of advantageous terms, and thus deceived the mayor and part of the council of the town, securing the hesitation in deciding and vacillation of purpose, which was what he principally desired. He despatched the prince de Condé, who had shown himself hitherto so inimical to the protestants, to restrain them by force in Languedoc, and Galland, a huguenot in his pay, to persuade them, by argument, to remain in tranquillity. He threw large garrisons into all places likely to be attacked, and collected quantities of provisions and fleets of boats at convenient points, for the purpose of affording supplies wherever they were found to be needful. In the mean time the Rochellois acted exactly, as he could have desired,—began with a solemn fast, instead of opening their gates to their English allies, hesitated, disputed, and inquired.†

* Mem. de Rohan, lib. iv.

† Mem. de Rohan.

The protestants of the south followed the same plan, but with still more disregard for their own best interests ; some rising and joining the duke de Rohan, some positively supporting the cause of their persecutor ; but the great majority remaining in hesitating inactivity, and only complaining of those who had taken arms before danger had grown into adversity.

After negotiating with the Rochellois till the few invaluable moments of surprise were lost, Buckingham at length determined to make a descent upon the Isle de Ré, and to endeavour to reduce the fort of St. Martin, into which Thoiras, the governor of fort Louis, had thrown himself with about 3000 men. The landing of the English was vigorously opposed by the gallant commander of the French ; but it was opposed in vain : they carried every thing before them at the point of the sword ; and the French protestants generally assert, that had Buckingham pushed on at that moment, according to the advice of the duke de Soubize, the fort itself must have fallen at once. The English commander, however, determined to reduce St. Martin by blockade ; and, neglecting all the rules of war, wasted his time before a fortress which his forces were not sufficient to surround.

In the mean time the royal army, commanded by the duke of Orleans, blockaded Rochelle by land ; and very little was accomplished except the casting of occasional supplies into the Isle de Ré ; but at length the king, having recovered from the fever which had detained him, joined the army with his minister, and affairs soon assumed a different aspect. Thoiras, who still commanded in the island, had represented that, without reinforcements and larger supplies of provisions and ammunition, he could not hold out much longer ; and at this time he suggested a plan for relieving fort St. Martin, which was discussed in the king's council, and would have been rejected had it not been supported by the powerful voice of Richelieu. Thoiras proposed that a sufficient number of troops to give

battle to the English should be landed at a point called the fort de la Prée, and suddenly make a general attack, in concert with the garrison, upon the besieging force. This scheme, almost the whole council opposed, declaring that the royal army was too small to afford any such detachment without abandoning at once the blockade of Rochelle: but the wisdom of Richelieu prevailed; and the only difficulty remaining, was to find money to carry through the project, provisions and ships being wanting, and the royal coffers entirely empty. Under these circumstances, the cardinal himself supplied the want, selling his jewels and plate to make up the sum required.* This act has, indeed, been attributed entirely to ostentation; and it has been alleged that the crown could not have had so little credit as to render it impossible to find money by other means. Doubtless, ostentation had its part; but, at the same time, we must remember, that the most extraordinary measures had already been tried and exhausted to replenish the royal treasury; that speed in the present instance was essential to success, and that no means could be so rapid as those which the cardinal employed. Considerable delay still took place ere a sufficient number of vessels could be procured; but at length 6000 infantry and 300 cavalry were safely landed on the Isle de Ré. Buckingham made one last, vain, unsoldier-like effort to repair his negligence, by attempting to storm the fortress; and then drawing off his troops, retired to his ships harassed in retreat by the maréchal de Schomberg, who charged his rear-guard in passing a narrow causeway, and killed, or took, between six and seven hundred men. These inglorious proceedings over Buckingham set sail for England, leaving the Rochellois, whose supplies he had only contributed to diminish, to lament his ill-conducted and unfruitful expedition. Although no one can deny that the whole operations of Buckingham were unskilful and weak, it must, nevertheless, be admitted, that the conduct of

* Aubery, Vie du Cardinal de Richelieu.

the Rochellois on his first arrival, and the behaviour of, the other protestants of France during his whole sojourn in the Isle de Ré, were quite sufficient to render both himself and his soldiers indifferent to the cause they were sent to support.

No sooner had the English abandoned the attempt upon the fort St. Martin, than the proceedings against the devoted town of Rochelle were pressed with redoubled activity. Measures were taken to allure the king of England into a temporary peace with France ; and whether from giving ear to the deceitful messengers of Richelieu, from the embarrassment of his own finances, or from the weakness of his own resolutions and character, Charles neglected to despatch both the fresh succour which he had promised to the Rochellois, and even the supplies with which he was bound in honour to furnish them, till they could be no longer availing. The prince de Condé and the duke de Montmorenci, in the mean time, kept the duke de Rohan in check in the south, though he contrived, with much skill, to occupy all their forces, and gained some unimportant advantages. During the winter the works against Rochelle proceeded, while the royal army, with the king and the cardinal at its head, passed the whole of the inclement season in the field.

Richelieu now appeared in a new character ; and while he carried on negotiations with Spain, with England, and with Holland, deceiving each as to his ulterior views, and deriving advantage from treating with them all, while he seated a French noble in the ducal chair of Mantua, and compelled the duke of Savoy to withdraw the intriguing Scaglia from the court of France, he showed himself in the camp as a general, and had a certain portion of the works against Rochelle placed under his command. This, however, was but a first step to those which succeeded. Rochelle, completely invested by land, had its port still open ; and though, after the Spanish fleet had been added, according to treaty, to that of France, no large vessel could approach the be-

leaguered city, yet many small craft, running along the shore, brought from time to time a scanty supply to the besieged. About this time the old marquis Spinola visited the French camp on the part of the king of Spain, and was conducted all over the works; when he dryly observed, that there were but two ways to reduce Rochelle,—"to open the purse, and to close the port." To accomplish the latter, Richelieu had been labouring indefatigably for some months; and an Italian engineer, whom he had employed for the purpose, had used every means that his art suggested, but had been constantly frustrated by the storms or high tides. At length Richelieu himself, we are told, projected a plan which, while it was worthy of his daring and energetic mind, was so vast in conception, that both friends and enemies prognosticated its failure. Choosing a spot on which the cannon of the town could not be brought to bear, Richelieu determined there to construct a dyke across the mouth of the long and narrow port of Rochelle. The haven at that spot was not less than 740 toises in width, and the force of the sea, when driven in by high winds, tremendous: but the cardinal was not to be deterred by difficulties; and causing long rows of wooden piles to be sunk, he filled up the interstices with immense quantities of stones, sinking two vessels charged with shingles to give it support. In the centre was left a vacant space to let the water pass in some degree, but not sufficiently wide to admit of any boat entering the port; and though the immense labour required to construct this extraordinary work of course rendered its progress slow, yet day after day the Rochellois found themselves more and more straitened, till at length the whole was completed, shutting up the port by a mound across its mouth of nearly 700 toises in length, of twelve toises in breadth at the base, and four toises at the causeway on the top. This causeway, too, was raised considerably above the highest tides, so that the soldiers placed for its defence could proceed to and from the land in security.

In the mean time, the duke of Orleans, weary of playing an inferior part, after having lately commanded in chief, quitted the camp and returned to Paris, where, with the queen-mother, he eagerly sought some new alliance, but suffered his inclinations as a man to interfere with his views as a prince, and was consequently frustrated in several negotiations into which he entered to that effect. These transactions gave no slight offence to the king, whose jealousy of the duke of Orleans had been long fed by those who sought his favour, and who well knew that the anxiety of his mother to procure a wife for his brother originated in her belief, that her eldest son would not live to the age of thirty. This belief was solely founded on an astrological prediction; but as Louis himself placed no slight faith in such idle dreams, his anger was probably not at all decreased by looking apprehensively on the prophecy which limited his life to thirty years.

He, too, grew weary of the confinement of the camp; and after lingering for some months in the hope of seeing Rochelle surrender, he determined at length to return to his capital, and on the 10th of February, 1628, set out for Paris. Richelieu, however, was left in command of the army, in virtue of a commission which gave him the supreme military authority in Poitou, Saintonge, and Angoumois, the marshals and lieutenant-generals of the force besieging Rochelle being especially directed to obey him as they would the sovereign himself. Thus was Richelieu at once invested with the highest clerical, civil, and military dignities, and appeared as bishop, prime minister, and commander-in-chief. If, however, the union of such offices was extraordinary, the attribution of the functions of general to a churchman, who knew little or nothing of military affairs, was not less so, especially when there is every reason to believe that the cardinal was quite conscious of his deficiency in that respect. But Richelieu, if he knew himself incapable of directing the operations of a large army, was wise

enough, and skilful enough too, to understand who were the people best calculated to do so. His judgment also was so keen, and he knew its power so well, that though he might not be able to afford the best military schemes himself, he was sure to discover and support those which were the best, as soon as they were proposed; and thus, even had he not possessed other qualities which rendered him eminently well qualified for the task he took upon himself, he would have been the best person who could have been chosen to command an army in which, as in that besieging Rochelle, were found generals of much and of little experience, of great and small capacity. But Richelieu did possess other powers of mind which produced the most extraordinary effects in the siege of Rochelle, and by which there can be little doubt that success was ultimately obtained. His talents for administration were unrivalled, and these he brought to the regulation of the camp, to the maintenance of general order and obedience, and to the reform of a number of corrupt practices which had caused the failure of a thousand great undertakings in the preceding reigns.

That the siege would be protracted to a great length there was little doubt; and it appeared probable that unless precautions were used, which had never been employed before, either the king would be obliged to recall his army and abandon the attempt from the want of finances to prosecute it to a successful conclusion, or that the soldiers, ill paid, fed, and clothed, would yield to fatigue and impatience, and desert in such numbers as to produce the same, or even worse, results. At once to prevent all waste, therefore, and to ameliorate the condition of the troops, Richelieu had recourse to a mixture of economy and liberality, which completely succeeded.

- The most lamentable source of expense in a French army of those times existed in the false returns of men made by the captains of companies by means of what were called *passes volans*, or flying passes, by which the names of men who were not actually in the camp, and sometimes,

we are told, not actually in the service at all, were kept on the muster-rolls, and their pay fell into the hands of the captains. This, as well as a number of other evils, besides the detention of the soldier's pay and the deterioration of his provisions, Richelieu remedied by appointing a commissary to each regiment, who saw the money distributed to the soldiers with his own eyes at a weekly muster, and who, refusing credit to all *passes volans*, only paid those who were actually present. The exact number of troops, therefore, was accurately reported every week, and the saving thus effected was immense. The soldiers, too, were better treated, were happier, and more obedient, and Richelieu was enabled to afford them additional clothing during the cold and damp winter and spring of 1627-28. Rigorous measures were also taken to insure that the peasantry of the neighbourhood should be regularly paid for the provisions which they brought to the camp; and thus the army was amply supplied, and the people of the country contented.

Several attempts were now made to take the city by surprise; none succeeded, and the blockade was still strictly continued. A part, however, of the dike was washed away by a storm accompanying one of the high tides of the month of March; but the damage was inconsiderable; and the rest of the dike, which stood firm, was sufficient to prevent the entrance of any but one or two small boats containing an insignificant supply of corn. Tidings, however, arrived that an English fleet, which had been in preparation, was about to set sail for the purpose of throwing supplies into Rochelle; and at the same time the Spanish fleet, which had been long cruising with that of France, was recalled to the ports of its own country. Some discouragement began to show itself in the army in consequence of these events, and Richelieu besought the king to return, which he accordingly did in the end of April. Early in May, the English fleet appeared; but Richelieu had taken every precaution both to de-

fend the dike and to oppose any landing upon the coast itself; and after lying off Rochelle for several days, the English allies of the unhappy Rochellois contented themselves with throwing in a few boatloads of corn into the town, and sailed away, promising to return soon with a force better calculated to relieve the place. No sooner were the English vessels out of sight, than the cardinal summoned the Rochellois to surrender, but they made no reply; and the siege proceeded as before, while a fresh expedition was prepared in England, and Buckingham loudly announced his intention of putting himself at its head. The hand of the assassin Felton, however, cut short the days of that weak, vain, favourite; and the cardinal once more represented to the Rochellois their hopeless condition, and besought them to throw themselves on the clemency of the king.

The Rochellois knew how little they could confide in the promises and fair words of Louis and his minister; but the strong hand of necessity was beginning to bow their constancy. Several of the public magazines had been already opened, and the produce, which was found very much deteriorated, had been consumed; famine was talked of as near; the cardinal held out hopes of advantageous terms; and at length the Rochellois sent out deputies to treat. They were admitted to the presence of the minister, and heard from his own lips the terms that he was prepared to grant; but after some consultation, the besieged refused to accept them; and, in hopes that the death of Buckingham might prove rather favourable to them than otherwise, prepared to endure the last extreme of famine in expectation of succour being still sent from England. The signs of increasing want in the beleaguered city, however, became apparent even to the besiegers, not only by the report of deserters, but by the appearance of immense crowds of old men, women, and children, who presented themselves at the lines beseeching, in vain permission to pass out. But pity was unknown to Richelieu; and strict orders were given not only to drive them back, but

even to continue to fire upon them wherever they collected, till they were received again into the town. The greater part of the stores of Rochelle were by this time consumed, and the populace had for months been obliged to live not only upon the shell-fish that encrusted the port, but upon every miserable substitute for food that the keen eyes of famine could discover. Still, however, they held out ; and though people were already occasionally found dead in the streets, or in the houses. from mere want, a strong party still opposed every summons to surrender. At length, on the 28th of September, 1628, the English fleet once more appeared, and for several days continued to cannonade the French fleet and the dike, but without vigour, and without success. At length negotiations were entered into between the commander on the part of England and the cardinal ; but the Rochellois, who had several vessels and some thousands of men acting with the English fleet, began to distrust their allies. Imagining that they could make better terms for themselves than would be obtained for them by the British government, those who were on board the ships sent deputies to treat separately with Richelieu.

At the same time the people of the town, not knowing the proceedings of their fellow-citizens in the English fleet, also sent representatives to negotiate, being now reduced to such an extremity of famine, that human nature could endure no longer the sufferings and the sights of suffering that the town of Rochelle presented. The Rochellois, however, still continued to boast that the place could hold out three months longer ; but Richelieu, before he acceded to the terms which such a position would have forced him to grant, determined, either by open means or artifice, to assure himself of the fact. The deputies from the fleet reached his quarters a little before the others ; and the minister received and talked to them apart, telling them what had been reported concerning the state of Rochelle, and offering to send in commissaries to examine the state of the town. He

acknowledged that the affairs of Italy rendered every day spent before Rochelle an irreparable detriment to the king ; and promised if three months' provisions could be shown within the town, to give them a *carte blanche* as to terms. After some further conversation, he left the deputies from the fleet and went to another room, where, by this time, those from the town were in waiting, and having heard their representations, and the terms they demanded, informed them that he had just been treating apart with their comrades in the fleet. The surprise and alarm of the unhappy Rochellois was now great, fearing that they and their friends might have been made mutually to counteract each other in their negotiations. But having learned to distrust Richelieu, they expressed a wish to see these deputies from the fleet of which he spoke. Richelieu at once consented, with a provision that no conversation whatever was to be held ; and the two bodies of deputies were brought into the presence of each other, being separated, however, by a long gallery. Richelieu then retired to renew the negotiations with those of the town ; and after considerable discussion, he concluded by saying that the terms they required were somewhat more favourable than he had been prepared to grant, but that as soon as the king, who was gone upon a tour for eight days, returned, he would inquire his pleasure, and let the Rochellois know the result.

" Good God ! " cried one of the deputies, thrown off his guard ; " your eminence speaks of eight days, when there is nothing in Rochelle to keep us alive for three ! "

" Then," replied Richelieu, whose stratagem had fully succeeded, " you had better cast yourself upon the mercy of the king at once." At the same time he proposed terms which, considering the situation to which the town was reduced, cannot be looked upon as severe ; though, in all probability, such conditions would not have been offered had not the immediate surrender of Rochelle been almost as necessary to the king as to the inhabitants. A general pardon was granted

for the past, the exercise of the protestant religion was guaranteed to all ; and all rights in their property, in or out of the town, were secured to the protestants. All decrees and judicial sentences against the Rochellois, for acts committed in the war, were reversed ; but the king reserved the future regulation of their magistracy to himself, and announced his determination of rasing the fortifications of the town. All their long-cherished privileges were lost ; but the famished inhabitants of Rochelle were only too happy to preserve life and freedom ; and, when the king's troops made their entry into the city, the number of unburied corpses that it still contained bore terrible testimony to the constancy with which the siege had been sustained. Fifteen thousand persons are said to have died of hunger, or of diseases proceeding from bad food, during the siege ; and in many of the houses whole families were found dead, their former dwellings serving them as sepulchres. Large quantities of provisions, however, were now brought into the town, by order of Richelieu, and all those were supplied who needed it.

One of the cardinal's first acts was to officiate at a high mass in the church of St. Marguerite, and then issuing forth to meet the king, he led him in triumph into a town, which, at the expense of 40,000 lives, had been conquered to favour the views and interests of the cardinal himself. A royal decree followed, which rendered the interpretation of the articles of capitulation as severe as it could be made ; and, having staid a week in the captured city, Richelieu himself proceeded to Brouage, which had been menaced by the English fleet. His caution in this instance, however, proved unnecessary ; for, as soon as the weather permitted, the adverse ships set sail for their own ports, leaving the protestants of France to their fate. What might have been effected had the huguenots been united amongst themselves, and had the support of England been vigorous and well-timed, may be judged from the fact of the duke de Rohan, with 6000 men, having

given full employment to the prince of Condé and the duke de Montmorency, each commanding an army 10,000 strong, during the whole period of the siege of Rochelle. For some time, even, after the reduction of that town, he continued the warfare with success. But it is necessary to notice, in the first place, the affairs of Italy, where new subjects of contention were springing up between France and the house of Austria.

Towards the end of December, 1627, in the early part of the siege of Rochelle, died Vincent, duke of Mantua, without children. He had been long in bad health, and two persons, even before his death, pretended to the right of succeeding to his dukedom. These were the duke of Nevers and the duke of Guastalla; while his niece, Mary of Mantua*, then in a convent in the Mantuan dominions, appeared plainly to be the heiress of the territory of Montferrat, which had been held by her uncle. The question of right, in the succession to the dukedom, need not be entered into here; though it would seem that the claim of the French prince was beyond doubt well founded. So, at least, was it considered by the duke Vincent himself, who sent for the duke of RetHEL, eldest son of Nevers, and kept him near him during his last illness, in order that he might be upon the spot, ready to take possession of the duchy on behalf of his father. He also eagerly sought a dispensation from the pope, for the marriage of the young duke with his niece, Mary of Mantua; and expressed his desire that, without any regard to his situation at the time, the marriage should take place immediately on the arrival of the papal permission.

The duke of Guastalla, however, strengthened himself by the support of the emperor, and is said even to have obtained a public act of investiture in regard to the duchy, which was a fief of the empire. At the same time, count Serbellon was despatched from Milan, as imperial envoy, to support the duke of Guastalla, and

* I find this princess also called Marguerite; which of the two names is correct I cannot ascertain, but am inclined to believe Mary to be so.

to protest against the claims of Nevers ; but he only, arrived in the neighbourhood of that city on the 24th of December, when the duke was evidently dying. The gates of Mantua were shut upon Serbellon during a whole day, on the pretence of receiving him in state upon Christmas-day ; and, in the mean while, the duke fell into the agonies of death. The dispensation from the pope, however, arrived on the same day ; and Mary, having been previously brought from the convent, where she had been educated, to the palace, was married to the young duke of Rethel. It is not, indeed, clear whether the duke Vincent was at this time living or dead, for his actual decease is supposed to have been concealed for some hours.

The next morning, Serbellon was admitted into the city, and lodged, for the time, in one of the ducal palaces, to which the young duke and his bride, under the title of prince and princess of Mantua, sent to desire his presence at their court, in order to receive his condolences on the death of the late duke. Serbellon, however, instantly retired from Mantua, together with the envoy from Savoy, protesting loudly against all that had occurred, while courier after courier was despatched to hasten the coming of the duke of Nevers himself. That prince only delayed his departure from Paris in order to draw from the court of France a solemn promise to support him in the duchy of Mantua ; and this was rendered difficult of attainment by the personal enmity of the queen-mother, Mary of Medicis, on motives which it may be necessary to explain.

Persuaded, as we have said, by the predictions of astrologers, that the king was drawing near the end of his existence, and that the duke of Orleans, his brother, would soon mount the throne of France, Mary de Medicis strove eagerly to force her youngest son into a marriage with Anne, daughter of the grand duke of Tuscany, a princess over whom she hoped to establish a permanent influence. The ugliness, however, of his proposed wife, made the duke resist all his mother's per-

suasions ; and the beauty and graces of Mary de Gonzague, daughter of the duke of Nevers, to whom he became attached after he had quitted the army before Rochelle, gave additional pertinacity to his determination. The duke, her father, did all he could to take advantage of the prince's passion for his daughter, in order to ally himself to the crown of France, and offered such a dowry as would have stripped him of half his possessions to pay. In this proceeding, however, he incurred the implacable hatred of the queen-mother ; and though Richeliéu himself was well disposed to support him, yet the jealousy which Louis XIII. entertained towards his brother prevented the minister from promoting the marriage of the duke of Orleans with any one.

When the duke of Nevers, therefore, on the point of setting out for Mantua, solicited the support of the crown of France, he was strenuously opposed by Mary de Medicis, and her opposition was continued through the whole of the struggle in which he was soon engaged ; but having, fortunately for himself, gained the affection of the celebrated Pere Joseph, a capuchin, who held the post of Richeliéu's confessor, and who possessed great influence with the minister, Nevers was at length enabled to set out, buoyed up with the hopes of immediate support from France.

That support soon became necessary. The imperial court not only refused to recognise his title to the duchy of Mantua, but censured him severely for having taken possession of that important fief without the emperor's investiture. The duke of Savoy, who had always maintained claims upon Montferrat, now denounced vengeance against the duke of Rethel, for having dared to marry his relation without asking his consent ; and made his indignation, on that account, a pretext for entering into a league with the Spaniards, in the Milanese, in order to invade the contested territory. The imperial nuncio threatened, at the same time, to put the duke of Nevers under the ban of the empire, if he did

not immediately place the duchy of Mantua in the hands of the emperor, in depôt, till the succession was determined. The emperor contended for the rights and dignity of his crown, which had certainly been somewhat injured by the manner in which the Mantuan coronet had been seized by the family of Nevers. But the duke of Savoy, and the Spaniards of the Milanese, contemplated acquisition of territory and opposition to France; and therefore, instead of waiting for the slow march of imperial diplomacy, they entered into a treaty for the partition of Montferrat, and invaded that territory at two separate points. The duke of Savoy made himself master of Trino and Alba; the former of which places he fortified, contrary to his treaty with the Spaniards; and then, refusing to join his forces to those of his allies, took Pontestura and Moncalvo. At the same time, don Gonzales de Cordoba laid siege to Cassal; but, proceeding negligently, suffered a number of French officers and soldiers to throw themselves into that place, and to supply it amply with both provisions and military stores.

In the mean while, the duke of Mantua remained totally without support: the pope and the Venetians refused to give him aid till the movements of France in his favour secured them against being left to contend with the overwhelming forces of Spain, Savoy, and the empire, united; and France, embarrassed with the siege of Rochelle in the west, and the war with the duke de Rohan in the south, could afford to detach but small forces to the aid of the Mantuan prince.

Nevertheless, his own family in France endeavoured to raise troops for his service; and Richelieu, who was most anxious to support him, determined to do all in his power to carry the army, thus raised by the marquis d'Uxelles, in safety through the territories of the duke of Savoy. Orders were accordingly sent from Rochelle to the *maréchal de Crequi*, who commanded in Dauphiné, to join his troops to those of the marquis d'Uxelles; and in case the duke of Savoy

refused a passage through his dominions, to effect it by force. Crequi, for a short time, made preparations to obey; but suddenly ceased, declared that he could not undertake the task, and, we are told, even prohibited, throughout the province he governed, the sale of provisions to the soldiers of the marquis d'Uxelles. The cause of this conduct, which was never punished by the court, has not been clearly explained; though, at the time, it was attributed to the influence which the queen-mother possessed over the governor of Dauphiné.

The duke of Mantua, however, was now in extreme necessity. The greater part of Montferrat had fallen already into the hands of his enemies; and the defence of Cassal, which had been so long protracted by the skill and courage of the garrison, could not be expected to endure much longer. The marquis d'Uxelles, therefore, determined to attempt the passage of Savoy with his own forces, which amounted to about 12,000 men, and advanced towards the marquisate of Saluzzo for that purpose; but he found the passes fortified, with the duke of Savoy entrenched before him, and was obliged to retreat upon Dauphiné, harassed by the Piedmontese troops. No sooner had they reached the French territories than the soldiers, prevented by the *maréchal de Crequi* from obtaining provisions, deserted by thousands; and in a few days the whole army was disbanded.

While such proceedings were taking place at the foot of the Alps, the duke of Mantua endeavoured to temporise with the imperial envoy; making first one proposition which he knew would be rejected, and then another, in regard to that temporary resignation of the duchy which the emperor demanded. At the same time he sent messengers continually to France, demanding aid, and representing the absolute necessity of giving that aid quickly, if it were intended to be effectual. At length, however, Rochelle fell, and the face of affairs was immediately altered. Richelieu, having ascertained with his own eyes that the coast was in a state of preparation to repel any attempt of the English fleet, hastened to Paris, and

immediately proposed to the king to afford effectual succour to the duke of Mantua. A council was held upon the subject ; and, for the first time, Richelieu found himself in direct opposition to the queen-mother. The council was divided in opinion, not as to whether the duke of Mantua should be supported, for on that all were agreed, but whether the aid given to him should be immediate, or should be delayed till the spring. The friends of Mary de Medicis advocated the latter proposal : but Richelieu, in a speech of much eloquence and power, pointed out that delay was ruin to the duke : that to suffer him to fall would be to dishonour the crown of France ; and to give up Montferrat to the cupidity of the Spaniards and the Piedmontese would be to aggrandise the enemies of the French monarchy at the expense of her allies ; and he ended by a sort of prophetic address to the king, in which he promised, that if no time were wasted, Casal should be succoured, and Italy pacified before the end of May, and the whole of the south of France reduced to tranquillity in the course of July.

The bolder counsel prevailed ; and an army of 14,000 men was marched towards Dauphine under the command of Thoiras, who had so gallantly defended the Isle of Ré, while large reinforcements were ordered to join him on his march. Richelieu, however, was not yet prepared to break entirely with his former benefactress, the queen-mother ; and, therefore, while he thwarted her on a point where her passions were opposed to the honour and benefit of the state, he gratified her in a matter of less general importance, but not of less interest to her. By his skilful management, the duke of Orleans was induced to promise that he would no longer pursue his intention of marrying Mary of Mantua ; and, as a compensation for this sacrifice, Richelieu obtained for him the supreme command of the army destined to relieve her father. It is seldom that, in that minister's acts of any kind, we cannot discover some under object to be gained in favour of

- his own far-seeking policy; and whether Richelieu did or did not intend this very appointment to act as a means of inducing the king to go into Italy, and of causing the whole conduct of the enterprise to fall into his own hands, such was the effect produced. Louis instantly became jealous of his brother; and, fearful that the duke should gain a degree of military renown which would eclipse that which had been obtained by the reduction of Rochelle, he commanded his minister to find some excuse for depriving the duke of Orleans of the office he had just conferred upon him. Richelieu replied, that he could see no possible means of doing so, unless the king could make up his mind not only to put himself at the head of the army, but to set out in order to take the command within eight days. Louis agreed at once; and preparations were instantly made for executing this sudden resolution. Some delay, however, occurred; and it was not till the middle of January, 1629, that the king set out to join the army in Dauphiné, accompanied by the duke of Orleans in quality of lieutenant-general of the whole forces. Richelieu himself followed two days after, and, notwithstanding a tremendous snow storm, pursued his journey with extraordinary speed to Lyons.*

- As soon as the duke of Orleans heard of his arrival, he quitted the royal cortege and returned to Paris, telling Bassompierre that he went because, when the cardinal was with the army, he could be of no use there, as Richelieu would not only execute his functions but the king's too. It was well, indeed, for France, that there was any one qualified to execute the parts for which neither of those weak princes were fitted. Richelieu, however, supplied all that they wanted; and, with energy all his own, he led the king forward through a country covered with snow, and infected with the plague, till, with a force of nearly 30,000 men, he halted

* The duke de Rohan says, that the king and the cardinal did not enter Lyons, but passed to Vienne, as the plague was then raging in the former city.

at the foot of those Alps, the passes of which he was resolved to force if his advance should be disputed.

The commander, De Valençay, had been despatched from Grenoble to demand a peaceful passage through Savoy for the royal army, and supplies of provisions, to be paid for, on the march ; but, as the duke of Savoy knew that it was against himself and his dearest plans that the king of France was about to act, he resolved, if possible, to defend the passes of the mountains, and only desired time to fortify himself completely, and to bring up his Spanish allies to support him against the power of France. For this purpose, he endeavoured to lull and deceive Richelieu, by proposals concerning a peace ; but the cardinal was far too shrewd to suffer himself to be delayed by the artifices of the Piedmontese prince : and stating at once, that the king of France would secure to him the town of *Trino*, which the duke had taken, and lands in *Montferrat* to the value of 12,000 crowns of gold per annum, on condition of his renouncing all claims to the rest of the territory, he advanced rapidly towards the passes, continuing the negotiation as he marched.

In the mean while, however, the Spanish troops were hurrying forward to oppose the passage of the French, and the duke of Savoy had taken means to barricade and fortify the narrowest part of the old road to *Susa*, so that he trusted to be able to defend the pass till his allies came up. Richelieu, however, had caused the defiles to be minutely examined, under cover of the very negotiations by which the duke of Savoy had proposed to deceive him ; and, upon the report of some of the agents who had been coming and going between France and Piedmont, the plan of attack was drawn up by the French marshals. The king hastened forward to be present at the impending contest ; and, at seven o'clock on the 6th of March, an attack was made upon the pallisades by which the duke of Savoy had closed the passage. For a short time the Piedmontese defended the barricades with considerable firmness ; but

two corps had been detached from the French army, which, passing over the higher parts of the mountain, notwithstanding the bad weather, appeared simultaneously on the two flanks of the army of the duke. Consternation seized the Piedmontese at once; and, abandoning all farther defence, they fled with such haste to Susa, that had they been hotly pursued that town might have been captured without resistance. The duke of Savoy himself quitted the field at full gallop, and narrowly escaped being taken. Susa surrendered the next day; and the advanced guard of the French army pushing on, threatened Turin itself. Louis, however, sent forward the marquis of Senneterre to the Piedmontese capital, still offering liberal terms; and the negotiations were immediately renewed, with a wholesome terror on the part of the Savoyard and Spanish commanders, which soon brought about all that Richelieu desired, without further effusion of blood or greater expense to France. The first treaty included only the duke of Savoy and the king; but, by its terms, the duke bound himself to give a free passage to the troops of France at all times for the purpose of entering the Montferrat, and to furnish them with provisions on their march; he promised, also, not only to permit them to levy and convey, through all parts of his dominions, supplies for the relief of Cassal, but to induce don Gonzales of Cordoba to raise the siege of that town, and to retire with his troops from Montferrat. He engaged, likewise, never to attempt aught upon that territory again; and to obtain, within six weeks, the ratification of a similar treaty on the part of Spain, by which it should be stipulated that the Spanish monarch should leave the duke of Mantua in full enjoyment of all his territories. Another article of the treaty bound him to enter into a treaty with the pope, the republic of Venice, the duke of Mantua, and the king of France, for the security of Mantua and the repose of Italy; and, as a pledge of his good faith, he left in the hands of the

king the fortresses of Susa and St. Francis, commanding at any time the passes of the mountains.

In return for all these concessions, the king, or rather the cardinal, granted nothing but what had been offered at first, namely, the possession of Trino, and a revenue of 12,000 crowns from the Montferrat. Thoiras was instantly sent forward with 3000 men to strengthen the duke of Mantua; and the king of France remained for some weeks at the little town of Susa, to witness the fulfilment of the treaty, which was executed step by step. Peace, too, was in the meantime concluded with England; and the formal league for the pacification of Italy, which had been stipulated, was drawn up and ratified. Growing tired of the confinement of a mountain camp, Louis at length, in the end of April, re-passed the mountains with a small part of his forces, and made preparations for reducing completely the protestants of the Sevens and Lower Languedoc, where the duke de Rohan still maintained in arms the cause of the huguenots against all the power of the prince de Condé and the duke de Montmorency. Rohan, however, had enemies still more tremendous to encounter, in the divisions, jealousies, and irresolution of his own sect, and the treachery of many of his own officers. None of the cities would receive or maintain any soldiers unless the adverse army was actually at its gates; and it was with the greatest difficulty that he could prevail on the inhabitants of Privas, the first town threatened with attack, to suffer the entrance of a garrison of 500 men, though they talked loudly of holding out their town to the last extremity. The king commenced the siege of that place before the arrival of the cardinal, who remained at Susa with the army to see the treaty fully executed; but shortly after the trenches were opened, Richelieu himself arrived, and the force he brought with him soon made the king master of all the outworks of the place. The defence was conducted with desperate courage by the marquis de St. André Montbrun, and the royal army suffered considerable loss:

but treason was in the place, and terror amongst the inhabitants ; and, after threatening to give up the commander to the enemy if he did not capitulate, the people of Privas made their escape during the night, leaving St. André, with 500 men, to defend a fortress which required 2000.

The place had been several times summoned, and terms had been offered, but they were in general so severe that the commander had refused to listen to them ; and when left with his garrison only, St. André retired to the citadel, and there opened a treaty with the king. It would seem that the person whom he sent to negotiate was gained by the cardinal, and by his means St. André and five of his principal officers were entrapped, having been induced to present themselves at the royal camp to treat without a written safe-conduct. The garrison then surrendered, being vaguely promised mercy ; but, either by accident or by the orders of the court, some cases of powder were blown up as the royal forces entered, which gave a pretext for instant violence and rapine. Several of the garrison were hanged on the spot, and the rest sent to the galleys. Such is the account of the duke de Rohan himself, the protestant commander-in-chief ; but no event in history has ever occasioned more contradictory statements than the capture of Privas. By other writers we are told, that, having discovered the flight of the inhabitants before it was fully accomplished, the royal army entered and sacked the town, committing the most horrid acts of barbarous violence ; and that Louis XIII. himself took a pleasure in looking on upon the butchery of the garrison. By the same writer, it is stated that Richelieu being ill of a fever when the army forced the town, could not prevent the scenes of rapine which took place ; but that rising from his bed as soon as he heard the truth, he mounted his horse, and, by the exertion of his authority, at length put a stop to the carnage. Certain it is, however, that the life of St. André himself was spared ; and, amidst the fury of religious and po-

litical rancour, it is difficult to discover the truth regarding the other circumstances connected with the taking of Privas.

Soon after Privas had fallen, Alets or Alais capitulated, and several other towns followed its example. A multitude of the protestant leaders had by this time sold themselves to the court; and the huguenot party was so completely ruined, that the duke de Rohan at length determined, though most unwillingly, to treat for a general pacification. The terms granted by Richelieu were hard, inasmuch as they left the protestants without any security whatever for the free exercise of their religion, which was at the same time promised to them. A general amnesty and religious toleration were the boons granted, but in return for them, the fortifications of every town where the protestants were more numerous than the catholics were to be levelled with the ground. The terms of no act of pacification with the huguenots had ever remained long inviolate on the part of the court, so that the proffered advantages were very insecure; but with three conquering armies in the field opposed to a divided people and a force of 5000 men, Richelieu could dictate the conditions. The pacification was accordingly concluded: the duke de Rohan, though insured a pardon and the possession of his property, retired for a time to Venice; and the king, quitting a part of the country where the plague was making dreadful ravages, proceeded in triumph to Paris.

Richelieu, however, remained, resolved to see the fortifications demolished with his own eyes; and he had the additional satisfaction of finding that while the inhabitants of Montauban, which place had been still strong enough to resist, refused to fulfil that article of the treaty in presence of the prince de Condé, they promised prompt obedience if the minister would come himself. Richelieu was not displeased to keep down the influence of the prince, and accordingly proceeded to Montauban, where the walls were immediately rased, and the magistracy and the protestant clergy vied with

each other in showing him honour and respect. To the members of the latter body who waited upon him at Montauban, he is said to have replied, that although he could not, in accordance with his profession, receive them as the representatives of a separate church, yet he should always be glad to see them as a body of men of letters ; and that as a minister of the crown he should never know any difference between the different classes of the king's subjects, except where there was a difference of fidelity, which he hoped would be thenceforward found equal in both religions. *

These great successes being complete, and the demolition of the protestant fortresses having left no party in the state to oppose the will of the king or his minister, Richelieu hastened to Paris, where events had occurred since his departure for Piedmont which produced grave results. Gaston of Orleans, on his appointment to command the royal forces, had yielded his intention of marrying Mary de Gonzague, and had consented that she should proceed to join her father at Mantua ; but when he quitted the army, feeling himself deceived by the stratagems of Richelieu, he determined to follow his own inclinations in regard to Mary, and, taking advantage of the absence of the king and his minister, to carry off the young princess of Mantua, and marry her without further delay. The queen-mother, however, obtained information of his design ; and hating Mary de Gonzague with a persevering animosity which rendered her deaf to all considerations of decency and prudence, she sent a party of her guards with three empty carriages to Colmar, where the princess was, with her aunt the duchess of Longueville. There the two ladies were suddenly arrested without any cause assigned, and hurried to the castle of Vincennes. The indignation of the duke of Orleans was excessive, and that of the king and the cardinal almost as great, when they heard of the manner in which the queen-mother had abused her authority. Richelieu is said to have expressed himself strongly to the monarch in regard to his

mother's views, pointing out to Louis that if he suffered her to extend her influence in such a manner, her domination would soon become insupportable ; and it appears that from this time forward the minister used all his power gradually to deprive Mary de Medicis of the authority which he had formerly contributed to restore. Immediately after his return from Italy he advised the king to set the princess at liberty ; and an order was sent from Privas to Vincennes to that effect. At the very time, an envoy from the duke of Mantua was in Paris, despatched to that city, for the express purpose of conducting her to her father's court ; but so wild were the queen's alarms, and so virulent her hatred, that she would not suffer the unhappy girl to depart, lest the duke of Orleans should carry her off upon the road. Such was the state in which the affair still remained when the king returned from Languedoc. • •

The duke of Orleans having absented himself from the court ever since the arrest of the princess, refused to return even now unless he received either the king's permission to marry according to his inclination, or some accession of fortune, influence, and dignity, as a compensation. The queen-mother, whose love for him was as weak as her hatred towards Mary of Mantua, was in despair at his prolonged absence ; but the king treated his brother's petulant conduct and his just demands with equal contempt, putting off all consideration of his claims till the return of Richelieu. The duke of Orleans, however, angry at receiving no satisfaction, fled to Loraine, and there issued a furious manifesto, in which, as he dared not openly attack his brother, and did not choose to cast the blame upon the queen, he let the weight of his indignation fall upon Richelieu, whom he believed wrongly to be the principal mover in all those proceedings from which he suffered. In this document, which he took care to have circulated in France, he touched truly and not tenderly upon the grasping ambition of the cardinal, whom he scrupled not to call *Maire du Palais*, and attributed to him all

the dissensions which had occurred in the royal family. Richelieu, however, only used the manifesto as an excuse to the queen-mother for taking no farther part in the opposition which was made to the duke's marriage; and shortly after, the minister returned to Paris to make head against a party which he could well perceive was in active preparation to thwart his best designs.* By the king he was received with apparent joy, but by the queen-mother with coldness and incivility; and for some time every attempt made to reconcile the friends become enemies only ended in fresh and bitter recriminations, in the course of which all respect was lost between the queen and the king's minister. Language, improper and indecent, seems to have been employed on both sides; and though at the express intercession of the king the queen was at length apparently reconciled to Richelieu, no cordiality was ever again known to exist between them. Mary de Medicis endeavoured on her part to form a strong party against the minister, whom many people did not scruple to blame severely for the little consideration which he now showed towards his former patroness; and Richelieu perceiving that the hatred of the queen-mother and the duke of Orleans rather increased than diminished the regard of the king, prepared upon that strong basis to work their ruin, as he had already contrived that of all who opposed him. Even in the midst of his disputes with Mary de Medicis, the king issued his letters patent appointing him principal minister. All the functions of that officer he had certainly performed before, but without having been formally nominated to the post till that time.† A new office, however, was still before him, — that of commander of an army in a regular campaign; and the performance of the duty of this station interrupted the intrigues in which he was plunged at the court.

In concluding the treaty which secured the territory of Mantua from any attack on the part either of Savoy

* Sept. 1623.

† Nov. 21. 1624.

or of the Spaniards of the Milanese, Richelieu, if he had not totally forgotten the claims of the emperor to decide upon the succession to the contested coronet, had so far contemned his menaces that he had not even required his approbation of the arrangement concluded. When, however, he had quitted Susa, and was entangled in the war of Languedoc, twenty thousand imperialists presented themselves at the frontiers of the Grisons, took the town of Coir (or Chur), and marching through the Valteline, suddenly attacked both the territory of Mantua and Montferrat. The garrisons were small and ill-prepared, the population peaceful and timid; and before Christmas almost every town of any importance in those two small states had been conquered by the Germans, except Cassal, which held out under the gallant Thoiras, and Mantua itself, the siege of which the imperialists were obliged to raise on Christmas day. In the mean time the news of these disasters had reached Paris; and as the necessities of the duke of Mantua increased, all private differences were forgotten in the desire to succour him; troops were assembled and marched upon Dauphiné, and Richelieu set out to put himself at the head of the army, four days after the siege of Mantua had been raised. He proceeded towards the scene of war with the extraordinary title of *Lieutenant-general, representing the person of the king*, a station which had never been granted to any one before; and to distinguish him from the other lieutenant-generals, Crequi, Schomberg, and de la Force, who commanded under him, he assumed the style of Generalissimo.

Although the whole capital of France showed one general enthusiasm in the cause of the duke of Mantua, yet the witty Parisians could not refrain from remarking upon the extraordinary authority given to Richelieu, and saying, that "in order to honour him, Louis had stripped himself of all his powers, except that of curing the king's evil." Nevertheless, more than a hundred of the principal persons of Paris accompanied him more than two miles from the gates; and by the king's order

a flying camp, of about three thousand men, waited his arrival on the road to Lyons. From that city he sent forward messengers to inform the duke of Savoy that he approached his territories for the purpose of aiding the duke of Mantua with thirty thousand men, and to demand a free passage and supplies of provision for his forces, according to the treaty of Susa.

The duke of Savoy attempted to procrastinate, despatching his son to a distant point of the frontier, in order to amuse the cardinal with negotiations; but Richelieu would not be diverted from his path in order to meet the prince, and hastened on upon an expedition, in the course of which the weak and the strong traits of his nature, his skill, his judgment, his boldness, his courage, his vanity, his falsehood, and his peculiar selfishness, stand out more prominent from the picture of his character than perhaps at any other period of his life. On the frontiers of Savoy the duke again sought to negotiate, hoping at all events to wring some concession from France as a recompence for the passage he granted. But Richelieu, who was well informed of his secret connivance at the proceedings of the Spaniards and the Germans against Montferrat and Mantua, was not to be deceived, and continued to advance, treating all the while with more good faith than the duke, it is true, but with equal cunning.

At length, no longer able to refuse, without coming to an open rupture, the Piedmontese sovereign agreed to suffer the passage of the French forces, and marked out their stations, promising at the same time a plentiful supply. He had determined, however, it would seem, to delay them as long as possible on the march, in hopes that Cassal might fall, and the Montferrat be irremediably lost to Mantua, ere the army of France could arrive to dispute the possession. A want of the promised provisions soon began to be felt. The duke himself advanced to Rivoli; and his troops were found to be gathering on the banks of the Lesser Dora. Fresh forces, it was reported, had been thrown into

several of the fortresses on the line of march, which he had laid out for France; and the aspect he assumed was so hostile, that the French marshals counselled the cardinal not to advance, without bringing the duke to some decided conduct. Upon this Richelieu sent to demand that the new fortifications of one of the towns which the army must pass should be demolished. The duke peremptorily refused, offering to withdraw a part of the garrison, but nothing more, and at the same time seizing the fords of the Dora.

Richelieu thereupon at once determined upon his conduct; and resolving to force a way through Piedmont, drew up a plan himself for capturing the person of the duke at Rivoli. That prince, however, receiving intimation of the design, withdrew to Turin; and Richelieu always believed that, in this instance, he had been betrayed by the duke de Montmorency. The passage of the Dora was effected without difficulty, the Piedmontese troops having been withdrawn when the duke retired; but Richelieu rendered the event remarkable, by appearing at the head of the troops, in a dress of philomot colour, a cuirass on his shoulders, a high plumed hat on his head, a sword by his side, and pistols at his saddle bow; while of four pages who accompanied him on foot, one carried his helmet, one his gauntlets, and two led on behind him a superb battle charger. Thus accoutred, and having left nothing of the churchman in his appearance, he passed the Dora, and then in the sight of the whole army, made his horse perform many feats of the manège, boasting aloud his skill in horsemanship.

He now advanced upon Rivoli, and thence sent to the duke of Savoy to apologise for so doing, assigning as a reason the total want of provisions at the former halting place. The duke, however, foolishly gave way to anger, and refused to see the messenger; and Richelieu, who knew as well how to draw advantage from the wrath of his opponents, as from the affection of his friends, instantly determined upon attacking the strong fortress of Pignerol, the possession of which, added to that of Susa,

which France had retained since the last war, gave the keys of Savoy into the hands of her neighbour. The garrison was not very strong; but on the advance of the French into the Piedmontese territory, the duke had sent reinforcements towards Pignerol, which Richelieu now undertook to make him recall. This he effected by threatening Turin itself, while the *maréchal de Crequi* was detached secretly to lay siege to the real object of attack. The duke of Savoy was completely deceived, recalled the reinforcements to Turin, and, before he discovered his mistake, Pignerol was completely invested. He now, however, did all that he could to repair his fault, and, collecting a considerable army, advanced to the relief of the besieged town. A still greater error, however, which he had committed, caused the fall of the place: the governor whom he had chosen for that important fortress was totally destitute of military experience.

The town itself surrendered to the fire of a battery of three pieces of cannon, but the citadel remained almost impregnable, and into it the governor threw himself with 800 men. As the preparations of the duke of Savoy to relieve the place were well known in the French army, it was determined to proceed by mine; but the rock was found so hard, that the engineers were driven to despair, when suddenly the governor proposed to capitulate. Richelieu, who knew that the duke was already on his march to Pignerol, and would be under the walls early next day, directed that any terms the governor required should be granted, provided he marched out at once. This, however, the old commander refused to do, not upon any military scruple, but because, being on the eve of Easter-day, he did not choose to go till he had taken the Paschal communion in his citadel. As this could not be done, however, before a certain hour, Richelieu, whose religious feelings seldom interfered with his political views, ordered all the clocks in the town to be put forward an hour during the night. The

governor was deceived ; and the garrison, after marching out, met their sovereign on the road to relieve them.

In the mean while, Richelieu, judging that the conquest he had just made was of more immediate consequence to France than the saving of the whole Mantuan territory, applied himself to strengthen the fortifications of Pignerol, the possession of which place, together with a French garrison in Susa, retained for many years the dukes of Savoy in a state of dependence upon the kings of France. The Venetians and the pope, however, who were more interested in the preservation of Mantua from the Austrians, and who saw that the French minister was inclined to delay the aid he had promised, now that he saw greater advantages to France to be reaped by the way, did all ~~that~~ they could to reconcile the cardinal and the duke of Savoy ; but the duke would listen to no terms ~~which~~ did not comprise the restoration of Pignerol ; and Richelieu could be induced by no persuasions to loose the hold he had obtained of that fortress.

As soon as Pignerol was placed in the state which he judged right, Richelieu, instead of advancing into the Montferrat, returned to France ; and, after having met the king at Grenoble, went on to Lyons, where he did all in his power to soften Mary de Medicis, and induce her to lay aside her designs against him, while he led the king on to the conquest of Piedmont. The enterprise against the duke of Savoy was very soon accomplished ; and, before the beginning of August, nearly three quarters of the whole territories of that prince were in the hands of France.

It is probable that Richelieu expected by this attack, not only to increase the power of France, but to draw the Spanish and German troops from the territories of Mantua and Montferrat. In this, however, he was deceived : the siege of Cassal was continued, a second army was sent against Mantua ; and the unfortunate duke, obliged to surrender his capital, saw himself stripped of all his dominions, with the ex-

ception of Cassal, which, in the hands of the gallant Thoiras, held out against the Spanish army. The preponderance which the house of Austria was obtaining in Italy, however, was an evil which Richelieu clearly saw could not be counteracted by the arms of France alone, without entailing irremediable evils upon the finances of the country, and he therefore had recourse to other means, to cut short the career of success in which the imperial armies were advancing. While he despatched the *maréchals* de Schomberg and de la Force, to relieve Cassal, he negotiated with the famous Gustavus Adolphus and with the Protestant princes in the North of Europe; and the court of Austria soon saw a storm gathering in that quarter, which induced the emperor to listen ~~more~~ willingly than he had hitherto done to the proposals of Richelieu's confessor, the capuchin Joseph, who had been sent to Ratisbon, together with more ostensible negotiators, in order to treat for a general peace. A suspension of arms was concluded between the French and Spaniards in the Montferrat (see Life of Mazarin); and before it terminated a treaty was signed at Ratisbon, by which the emperor ~~agreed~~ to grant the investiture of Mantua and Montferrat to the duke of Nevers, upon very tolerable conditions.

Some difficulties occurred in the execution of this treaty, as far as it regarded the Montferrat; but as those events do not precisely belong to the life of the cardinal de Richelieu, we shall turn to his proceedings, after his return to France with the king, in the beginning of August, 1630. Both the monarch and his minister had passed in safety through a whole tract infected with the plague; but, shortly after their arrival at Lyons, Louis XIII. fell ill, and in a few days his physicians pronounced his case hopeless. It was now that all the hatred which his power had caused to hide its head, rose up openly against Richelieu; and the two queens, united only in their enmity towards the minister, never quitted the bedside of the king but to form and

cement the party which was intended to work the cardinal's destruction as soon as the monarch should be no more. The situation of Louis, which did not permit of any attention to affairs of state, excluded Richelieu from his presence; and had it not been for the grand ecuyer, St. Simon, who never left the king, the prospects of the minister, in the event of the king's death, would have been desperate. That officer, however, suggested to the monarch the necessity of providing for the cardinal's safety; the duke de Montmorency, governor of Languedoc, promised to convey him to some place of security as soon as the king was dead; and Richelieu, being introduced into his sovereign's chamber, deplored, with tears, the sincerity of which cannot be doubted, the situation of his too kind master. In the mean while, the party of his enemies triumphed at the court; the bold and the rash joined the faction of the queens; and the prudent waited with wise doubt till they saw the result they hoped for. Happy was it for those who did conceal their feelings; for suddenly the internal abscess, which had nearly reduced the king to the tomb, broke, passed away, and in a very few days he appeared perfectly convalescent.

Richelieu might now have triumphed securely, and might also have sought his revenge at once; but he acted more prudently. He remembered that the queen-mother, the great mover of the cabal against him, had formerly been his benefactress; and though probably his gratitude was of no very sensitive nature, yet he was wise enough to affect a virtue that he did not possess, and to suffer the offence to be given by her. As if nothing had occurred to shake his affection towards her, he accompanied her in the same boat upon the Loire as the court returned to Paris; and while there can be little doubt that he represented to the king his mother's ambition and attachment to the duke of Orleans, the little love she possessed for Louis himself, and her tyrannical and domineering disposition, he at the same time did nothing openly to offend that princess, or to wreak

his vengeance upon any of those who had joined the cabal against him.

At Paris, however, the queen-mother herself, unable to restrain any longer the violent passions that struggled in her bosom, seemed resolved to keep no terms with the cardinal, refused to see him at the council, and to hold any communication with either himself or his niece, Madame de Combalet, who was one of the ladies of her household. For some time the king in vain endeavoured to reconcile her to his minister; but, on the day of St. Martin, he obtained her permission to send for Richelieu and his niece, and a promise that she would treat them with civility. But it would appear that on this occasion she had determined to bring her influence over the king to a last trial against that of the cardinal; and when the minister arrived with his niece at the palace of the Luxembourg, she ordered them to be admitted separately. As soon as she beheld Richelieu's niece, however, all her passion burst forth, and she assailed her with such low and violent invective that Madame de Combalet retired from her presence in tears. Richelieu saw from the countenance of his niece, as she passed through the room in which he waited, the reception she had met with, and soon found that his own was not to be milder. The queen forgot the dignity of her station and the softness of her sex, and, in language more fit for the markets than the court, called him rogue, and traitor, and perturber of the public peace; and, turning to the king, she endeavoured to persuade him that Richelieu wished to take the crown from his head, in order to place it on that of the count de Soissons.

Had Richelieu been as sure of the king's firmness as he was of his regard, this would have been exactly the conduct which he could have desired the queen to hold; but he knew Louis to be weak and timid, and easily ruled by those who took a tone of authority towards him; and when at length he retired at the command of the monarch, who found that his mother was only becoming more and more violent every moment, he seems to have

been so uncertain how the whole would end, that he ordered his papers and most valuable effects to be secured, and preparations to be made for immediate departure. All these proceedings had been watched by the courtiers : Richelieu had been seen to quit the queen's cabinet troubled and gloomy, his niece in tears ; and some time after, the king himself followed in a state of excessive agitation, and after having paused for a very short time at the Hôtel des Ambassadeurs, left Paris for Versailles, without seeing his minister. The whole court thought the rule of Richelieu at an end, and the saloons of the Luxembourg were crowded with eager nobles ready to worship the rising authority of the queen-mother, and to triumph with her over the fall of the favourite. Only three persons of great influence ~~refrained~~ from going to congratulate her upon her success, who were the duke of Montmorency and the ~~maréchal~~ de Crequi and Bassompierre ; but messengers had been seen with them from the grand écuyer St. Simon, who had accompanied the king to Versailles, and who thence conveyed to the doubting minister a message from the monarch, by means of the cardinal de la Valette. By him Richelieu was informed that the king had said, " Tell the cardinal de Richelieu that he has a good master, and bid him come hither to me without delay."

Richelieu felt that the real power of France was still in his hands ; and setting off for Versailles, he found Louis full of expressions of regard and confidence. Rumours every moment reached Versailles of the immense concourse that was flocking to pay court to the queen-mother : the king found himself nearly deserted, and all that Richelieu had said of her ambition was confirmed in the monarch's mind ; while his natural good sense told him, that a minister who depended solely upon him, and who under him exercised the greatest power in the realm, was not likely to wish his fall. Measures were instantly concerted for punishing the principal personages of the queen's cabal ; and Marillac, keeper of the seals, one of the great supporters

of Mary de Medicis, was ordered to repair to Glatigny, near Versailles. He was the first of her courtiers to be undeceived in regard to her success ; for having hastened to Glatigny, in expectation of favours, he was commanded, on the following day, to deliver up the seals, and was then arrested on the spot. While the guards conducted him to prison at Chateaudun, a messenger was sent off to marshal Schomberg, with orders to arrest the other Marillac, commanding part of the army in Italy, which was executed without difficulty.

In the mean time, the news of these two events spread to Paris : the halls of the Luxembourg, which the day before had been crowded to suffocation, were instantly deserted ; and the queen-mother found herself abandoned by all those fawning sycophants, whose confidence and disappointment procured for the day of St. Martin, 1630, the title in French history of *The Day of Dupes*. Under these circumstances, Mary judged it expedient to temporise ; and though both Richelieu and herself must have known that forgiveness on either part could never be granted, yet the king still sought to restore some appearance of reconciliation between his mother and the cardinal, and they lent themselves to his efforts. The violence of the queen-mother's temper, however, could not be long restrained ; and Richelieu saw that the moment was at length arrived, when Louis, wearied out with his mother's irritability and struggles for domination, was prepared to take any measures to free himself from her presence.

The last actual rupture between the monarch and Mary de Medicis was brought about by the conduct of the duke of Orleans, who had returned to the court, and appeared reconciled both with the king and the cardinal ; a number of favours were granted to his creatures, at his request ; and all seemed peaceful in that quarter, when suddenly he again quitted the court, and retired to Orleans, threatening to defend himself in the provinces which had been assigned to him as appanage, if he were molested. The king, and perhaps

the cardinal also, attributed this abrupt retreat to the instigations of the queen-mother ; and Richelieu advised the sovereign to retire to Compiègne, in order to concert measures for the purpose of withdrawing Mary from the bad counsels of those who misled her. Such were the delicate terms which he used regarding the extreme means which he was about to employ. The queen-mother, as he well knew would be the case, followed almost immediately to Compiègne, not choosing to lose sight of her son ; and shortly after her arrival a privy council was called, to consider what was necessary to be done. Richelieu then, after affecting to decline speaking in a matter in which he was personally interested, yielded to the king's command, and, after an artful though luminous ~~exposure~~ exposure of the case as it stood, went on to declare that there was nothing left for the king than either to dismiss his minister, in order to satisfy his mother, or to subject the queen to a temporary and gentle coercion, while the evil counselors, who had impressed her mind with many false notions, were removed from her, and punished according to their demerits. After examining which of these expedients was the best, he decided upon the latter, though at the same time he besought the king to permit him, as soon as it was accomplished, to retire from public affairs altogether, inasmuch as having then put an end to civil war, reduced external and internal enemies, and stifled all cabals, he should leave his royal master a tranquil and happy realm, and to his successors in the ministry an easy and a pleasant task.

The effect of his speech was of course such as he desired. The king was the only person to be led, all the other counsellors being at the beck of Richelieu so long as he could contrive to guide the monarch. Every thing was left to his direction, and the only part of his proposal which met with any opposition was his insincere offer to retire from office. All this being arranged, Richelieu once more caused several propositions to be laid before Mary, which she had already rejected more than once, and

then, at a very early hour of the morning, set out with the king and the rest of the court, leaving the queen-mother still in bed. The *maréchal d'Etrées*, however, and a large body of the royal guard, remained behind, with orders to arrest the princess de Conty, one of Richelieu's chief enemies, and to send her under a guard to Eu in Normandy, without suffering her to see the queen. He was farther directed to place such guards as might be necessary to prevent Mary from making her escape; but to treat her with every demonstration of respect, and to suffer her to take all needful exercise.

That such an act must be followed up with vigour Richelieu well knew; and all who had in any great degree joined the cause of the queen now felt the resentment of the minister. The duchesses of Elbeuf and Ornano were banished from the court; and the *maréchal de Bassompierre*, as well as Vautier, the queen's physician, were thrown into the Bastille. As soon as these tidings reached him, the duke of Orleans began to arm for the deliverance of his mother; and, in company with the dukes of Elbeuf, Bellegarde, the count de Mœt, and some others, made a show of defending Orleans against the king; but thither the monarch and his minister marched with that energetic rapidity which characterised all Richelieu's actions when he was not embarrassed by utter want of means. At his approach the unstable Gaston gave up the thoughts of defence, and retired to Bezançon. The king then followed to Dijon, and issued a decree, declaring all the supporters of his brother guilty of high treason. The monarch also despatched a copy of the document to the parliament of Paris, with an order to register it at once; but the parliament demurred, and proceeded to deliberate. It was alleged with justice that the decree was informal, having, in the first place, been addressed to the parliament of Dijon: but it was moreover urged against it, that the president de Coigneux being therein declared guilty of high treason, the

court of parliament could not condemn one of its presidents without hearing him ; and, also, that it affected the duke of Orleans, a prince of the blood royal. The parliament, therefore, proceeded to what was called *un arrêt de partage*.

Richelieu, however, could bear no contradiction in the course which he had laid down for himself, and hurrying back to Paris with the king, he sent in the monarch's name a command for the members of the parliament to present themselves at the Louvre in a body and on foot. He was obeyed immediately ; and the king receiving them with great haughtiness, the keeper of the seals made them a speech, in which he declared that they had no authority to deliberate upon affairs of state ; that the business of private individuals they might discuss, but that the will of the monarch in other matters they were alone called upon to register. The king then tore with his own hands the page of the registers on which the *arrêt de partage* had been inscribed, and punished with suspension from their functions several of the members of the various courts composing the parliament of Paris. The duke of Orleans replied to the king's decree by a proclamation directed against Richelieu, and laid a formal charge against him before the parliament, accusing him of designs upon the persons of all the royal family, with a view of rendering himself master of the kingdom.

The king, however, ordered the charge to be rejected ; the parliament was submissive ; and leaving the duke to destroy his own advantages by his own weaknesses, Richelieu directed his attention to the queen-mother, whose residence at Compiègne was too near Paris ; and there seems to be little doubt of his having laboured skilfully and effectually to cause her to quit the country. First he proposed to her to retire to Modlins or Angers ; but as soon as she found that her residence at Compiègne was disagreeable to Richelieu, she refused to move ; and finding that an appeal she made to the parliament met with no attention, she became more and more violent

and uneasy, declaring that she would not proceed to any spot designated by the cardinal, except by force. Thereupon Richelieu spread a rumour that the marshals of Schomberg and Etrées, and the marquis de Breze, with twelve hundred horse, were ordered to march upon Compiègne, for the purpose of carrying her to Moulins, with or without her consent. She now thought of making her escape; and having engaged the son of the marquis de Vardes, who commanded in la Capelle, in his father's absence, to afford her a retreat in that town, she quitted the palace at Compiègne by night. No guards opposed her flight, which might have led her to perceive that she was, in fact, following the impulses given her by Richelieu; but still she pursued her way, and at la Capelle found that the old marquis de Vardes had been sent thither in haste by the minister, who was already not only well aware of her flight, but of the direction she had taken. The governor immediately on his arrival had turned his son out of the fortress, and now shut the gates in the queen's face; who having no certain refuge in France, fled to Flanders, and cast herself upon the protection of a nation towards whom her son had always shown an implacable enmity. She thereby committed a fault which was never to be retrieved, by her own act causing Louis to believe the truth of reports which had been whispered before, that she had long kept up some secret correspondence with the Spanish crown. She wrote to him, however, from Brussels, laying the whole blame of her conduct upon the cardinal; but her letter was answered by the king in the following remarkable words:—

“Madam, — I have reason to be convinced, by many proofs, of the affection and sincerity of my cousin, the cardinal de Richelieu. The religious obedience which he renders me, and the faithful care which he takes of all that regards my person and the welfare of my realm, speak for him. You will permit me,

madam, if you please, to say that the action which you have just committed, and all that has taken place for some time past, does not allow me to be ignorant of what have been your purposes hitherto, or of what I have to expect from you for the future. The respect which I bear towards you prevents me from saying more."

Thus ended the career of Mary de Medicis in France ; and Richelieu, having seen the last of those from whose power he had reason to be apprehensive fall before him, prepared to reduce the duke of Orleans to the position which he intended him to hold in France for the rest of his life.

The queen quitted Compiègne on the 18th of July, and on the 12th of August the king published a declaration, in which, after having severely censured the conduct of his mother and his brother, he pointed plainly to the fact of their having been misled by the predictions of astrologers to hope that the throne would soon be vacant. Having next given all honour and credit to his prime minister, he confirmed his former edict, pronouncing all those who accompanied the duke of Orleans to be guilty of high treason ; and included those who attached themselves to the queen-mother under the same denunciation, declaring all their moveable fiefs, revenues, and property, as well as their offices, to be forfeited to the crown. This decree proved no empty threat, as Richelieu proceeded to act upon it, not only in order to punish those who had sought his overthrow, but to deprive them of the means of caballing against him for the future. Nor was vengeance the only gratification which Louis gave to his too powerful minister, whose vanity was flattered at the same time by his estate called Richelieu being erected into a dâchy, entitling him to a place amongst the peers of France ; and his authority, as well as revenue, was increased by being appointed governor of Britany. The highest in the land were now at the feet of the cardinal. A prince, six dukes,

and three marshals of France accompanied him on his reception as a peer of France; and the prince de Condé himself, his former enemy, proceeded from province to province sounding his praises to the different parliaments in a tone of base flattery, which drew little from the minister but the contempt it merited. Shortly after the duke of Guise, who was governor of Provence, perceiving, from certain indications not to be mistaken, that Richelieu was resolved to punish him in some way for the regard he had testified on various occasions towards the queen-mother, refused to come to the court at the command of the imperious minister, and retired to seek an honourable exile at Florence. The duke of Lorraine, to whom the duke of Orleans had again applied for aid, and who had raised some troops to resist the power of Sweden, also called upon himself the wrath of Richelieu; and a French army, with the king and the cardinal at its head, marched to invade his little territory. But the only serious opposition which he met with in the arbitrary course on which he was now advancing with rapid steps, proceeded from the parliament of Paris, which, shortly before the king left the capital for Lorraine, made one last struggle for the preservation of its own rights and privileges, and for the security of the lives and property of the public.

In order to carry forward more rapidly the proceedings against those who had been already pronounced guilty of high treason, for their attachment to the duke of Orleans, Richelieu had induced the king to promulgate an ordinance for the establishment of a *Chamber of justice* of the same nature as that which had condemned the unhappy Chalais. As this was in the capital itself, and both under the eyes and within the jurisdiction of the regular courts of law, the parliament refused to register the king's declaration, unless it should be declared therein that the members of the extraordinary commission were to be chosen from its body. Richelieu, however, pursued his course, and the king commanded the parliament to cease its opposition. The bodies of law, however, still resisted,

demanding that at least two of the principal officers of this extraordinary court should be chosen from the parliament; but finding that Richelieu, by letters patent, established the chamber of justice at the arsenal, without naming one person from the regular legal courts, they proceeded boldly to a decree, forbidding the commissioners named by the minister to exercise their functions, and ordering the officers of the parliament to see that the decree was not violated. No sooner were these proceedings known at the court of Louis, who by this time had reached Metz on his march into Lorraine, than the decree was annulled by the king in council, and a number of the presidents and counsellors of the parliament were ordered to present themselves in fifteen days, wherever the monarch might be. The command was immediately obeyed; and the king severely rebuked the representatives of the parliament of Paris, suspending five from the exercise of their functions, and sending the rest back with strict commands to meddle no more with the rights of the crown.

The duke of Lorraine was soon reduced to make his peace with France, and Gaston of Orleans was obliged to retire to Flanders. About this time, however, Richelieu met with two personal mortifications which depressed him much. Gustavus Adolphus, who had traversed almost the whole of Germany as a conqueror, expressed a wish to confer with the king of France, who had effected many a diversion in his favour, if he had not given him actual support. But Louis, timid and retiring, avoided the interview, and replied that he was not well; requesting, at the same time, that the Swedish monarch would confer with his minister, the cardinal de Richelieu. Gustavus refused at once; and is reported to have replied to the king's message, that he would send one of his valets to confer with Richelieu if necessary, but that he held himself at no less a price than the king of France; the crown of Sweden never having yielded precedence to that of France. The second mortification which the minister

had to undergo proceeded from the king himself, and, was sufficient to make Richelieu believe for a time that his influence with the monarch was declining. A marriage had been proposed between his niece, madame de Combalet, and the count de Soissons, one of the princes of the blood, by the count's mother; and Richelieu had offered many advantages, which induced the count himself to listen willingly to the proposal, only requiring that the king should express his desire that the marriage should take place. Richelieu looked upon it as certain that Louis would do so at once; but, to his surprise, the king avoided giving any answer, and the minister soon found that he was averse to the alliance. Taking his course at once, Richelieu instantly pursued the wise policy of breaking off the engagement, and suffering all mention of it to drop entirely; but the very proposal, though it had no farther effect upon the king, had already raised up an enemy to the cardinal in the prince de Condé, whose branch of the royal family was not a little jealous of that of Soissons, and who now in person retired to Bruges.

In the mean while some events had been taking place in Italy, which are rendered interesting by one of the most extraordinary manœuvres in history, to which France resorted for the purpose of retaining possession of Pignerol. The emperor, as we have before seen, at length promised the investiture of Mantua and the Montferrat to the house of Nevers; and a treaty was accordingly entered into for the evacuation of all the strong places taken by either party. The king of France engaged to give up all his fortresses to the duke of Savoy, and the imperial troops were to surrender the principal towns on the Mantuan territory, one by one, as the cities of Savoy were delivered up by France. Charles Emanuel, the former duke, had died in the course of the war; and Victor Amadeus, who succeeded him, held very different sentiments in regard to France from those which had been entertained by his father. Having married the sister of the French king, means of

persuasion were easily found ; and he was induced to agree that France should retain Pignerol, upon a vague promise of other advantages. A difficulty, however, existed, which was scarcely to be surmounted by any ordinary means. Hostages had been given on both sides, and commissioners had been appointed on behalf of the emperor and the king to witness with their own eyes the surrender of the towns to their future possessors ; and it was well known that the Spanish and imperial courts would sooner renew the war than suffer France to retain a fortress which afforded the key to Piedmont and an easy entrance into Italy at all times. It thus became very difficult to retain Pignerol ; and yet Richelieu was resolved neither to abandon it, nor even to withdraw the garrison from it, on the bare promise of the duke of Savoy to restore it to France. Mantua and Pignerol were the last places to be delivered up ; and the means taken to withhold the latter, without either endangering the hostages or renewing the war, were as follows. The marquis de Villeroy, commanding in Pignerol, sent forth a rumour that the plague was in the citadel some time before the period appointed for surrendering the place to the duke of Savoy. He thus kept all inquiring eyes away for the time, and accounted for a diminution in the numbers of the garrison. He next parted off a portion of one of the storehouses, and filling the rest with grain, provided in the part thus separated a sort of temporary barrack for three hundred men, who were selected from the garrison and concealed therein. The day appointed for the surrender having arrived, an envoy from the duke of Savoy, together with the examining commissioners on the part of Spain and the empire, presented themselves at the gates of Pignerol. Villeroy received them with every appearance of politeness, and fatigued them with an examination of the different fortifications of the town, while, at their request, he caused large fires to be lighted and aromatics to be burned in the rooms of the citadel where the plague was supposed to have been. At

length, as it began to grow late, the garrison was marched out before them, taking the way to France, and the commissioners proceeding to the castle commenced their perquisitions. Tired with what they had already seen, and somewhat apprehensive of the pestilence, the commissioners in general performed their office very carelessly, while the envoy of Savoy, who was in league with Villeroy, gave them every encouragement to pass hastily over their examination; but one of the followers of the envoy, a colonel Porporati, not at all contented with such light search, pried into every corner of the citadel, so that his leader and Villeroy were in constant fear lest he should perceive the place where the French soldiers were concealed. An excuse, however, was found for sending him away, and the commissioners passed the granary without discovering the fraud. The keys were then given up to the Piedmontese minister, who, according to their agreement, took no notice that Villeroy retained one belonging to a postern of the citadel; and four or five Piedmontese soldiers having been stationed at different points, the imperial commissioners gave an attestation that the marquis had faithfully delivered up Pignerol to the duke of Savoy. This was instantly despatched to Ferrara, where the French hostages had been detained, and they were in consequence set at liberty. No sooner were they free, than the French court sought a cause of complaint against the governor of Milan, who afforded them a just pretext by keeping one or two German regiments in the Milanese contrary to treaty. France affected to see therein all sorts of dangers to Mantua, Montferrat, and the Valteline. The reproaches of Richelieu were carried to the governor of Milan by Mazarin, who was now rising fast in the confidence of the French minister; and on the Spaniards recriminating in regard to some unimportant points, and using some vague and impotent menaces, the envoys of Louis demanded loudly of the duke of Savoy to permit once more the passage of the French troops through his territory, or at least to give some security that he would permit

their passage in case the Spaniards made any fresh attempt to increase their power. A threat of forcing the passes was held out unless the duke gave his assent within three days. Though the whole was concerted with him, the duke of Savoy affected to be taken by surprise by this demand, and sent to demand whether the Spaniards would afford him such effectual aid to resist France as to insure his dominions from being again conquered. The Spaniards required to know what would be sufficient. He answered not less than ten thousand foot and a thousand horse; which, though in fact moderate, was more, as he well knew, than the Milanese could by any means spare. The duke of Feria was therefore obliged to state his inability, but sought to enter into negotiations with the French, which they would not hear of; and pressing their demands upon the duke of Savoy, they made him grant, with great apparent reluctance, that Pignerol should be placed in their power as a deposit, to guarantee a free entrance into Italy for the French armies, in case the Spaniards attempted any thing against the Montferrat or Mantua. This farce having been performed, a few French and Swiss troops were marched to Pignerol, in such a manner as to favour the concealment of the plot which had just been so successful; and the three hundred soldiers issued from their granary, after having lain in concealment for thirty-two days. It had been stipulated with the duke of Savoy that the place was to be restored to him in six months, but this engagement was never fulfilled; and the duke afterwards sold the fortress to France for a sum of money.

If this was a comedy — and certainly it was one of a very discreditable kind — Richelieu was about the same time engaged in preparing a tragedy, as dark and bloody as was ever performed. We have already seen that the *maréchal de Marillac* had been arrested in Italy immediately after the famous *Day of Dupes*. The charge that would be brought against him was not known; and it was supposed that his brother, the late keeper of

the seals, who had openly espoused the party of the queen-mother, had rendered himself far more obnoxious to the minister. Such, however, was not the case ; for Richelieu, who was all ear, had heard that during the illness of the king at Lyons, the maréchal de Marillac had advised the queen-mother to arrest the minister as soon as the monarch was dead. This was an offence not to be forgiven by Richelieu ; and the marshal having been brought to Verdun, a court, authorised by a special commission, was appointed to try him in that town. Its constitution was more regular than usual, the majority of the members being chosen from the parliament of Burgundy ; but Richelieu soon found that the judges thus appointed were less willing to serve the purposes of his revenge than he had expected. All the preliminary steps showed that Marillac would be declared innocent ; and the cardinal, not choosing either to lose his victim or to murder him in the face of an acquittal, annulled the commission, and appointed a new chamber of justice to be held at the little village of Ruel, near Paris. The court now consisted of four-and-twenty members ; and though some of those who had composed the former tribunal were retained, a number of others were added who were notoriously inimical to the prisoner. The marshal protested loudly against all these proceedings, and objected formally to a number of the judges, who were his known enemies ; but the trial went on, and was conducted in a manner as informal as the tribunal before which it took place.

The prisoner was accused of peculation ; and the first question became whether, according to the French law, that crime was punishable with death : by a forced construction of one of the old ordinances it was judged to be so ; and after a hurried trial, in which all forms of justice were violated, the judges proceeded to the vote. Thirteen of the members of the court declared against the prisoner, who was thus condemned by one voice. It was the practice, however, in all criminal trials in France to take the votes three times consecu-

tively, and the last time very slowly ; and it often happened, that any of the members in whose bosom a doubt still lingered gave mercy the advantage of that doubt on the second or third time of being asked their verdict. Chateauneuf, the keeper of the seals, however, was president of the court ; and willing, at any expense, to please the all-powerful cardinal, he took the votes but once, and immediately pronounced sentence of death upon Marillac.

All the friends and relations of the unfortunate marshal now hurried to St. Germain, to beseech the minister to obtain a pardon for him. " See the king, gentlemen," said Richelieu ; " he is gracious ;" and the sad party were introduced into the monarch's presence. He heard them in silence, and then saying he would think of their request, bade them retire. The next morning they again visited Richelieu ; who asked what the king had said, and upon being told, he answered, " If the king told you to retire, you had better obey the king ;" and, finding that they pursued their entreaties, he gave way to a burst of passion, exclaiming, " I advised you to retire in obedience to the king, — I now command you to do so, in his name."

It was now clear that there was no mercy for Marillac ; and he was accordingly executed the next day*, in the Place de Grève, protesting his innocence to the last. After his death, a number of stories were circulated on both parts, all probably equally void of truth. Richelieu was accused by the family of the victim of having personally solicited his condemnation from each of the judges, and then having scoffed at them when he was condemned, saying, that God must give greater lights to the judges of France than to other people, as they had discovered crimes worthy of death in the *maréchal de Marillac*. On the other hand, the partisans of Richelieu accounted for his severity and that of the king by saying, that the marshal had been corruptly induced by the queen-mother to favour the Spaniards and the Austrians

* May 10. 1632.

in Italy ; but that the charge had not been made in court from consideration for the queen. No certain fact tending to confirm either of these statements has been brought forward, and neither is supported by probability.

While such transactions were taking place in the capital or its vicinity, Richelieu notified to the viceroyal court of Brussels, that, if Spain gave the slightest assistance to the duke of Orleans in any attempt to invade France, he should look upon the existing peace as broken from that moment. At the same time, however, he did not scruple to instigate the States of Holland to continue the war vigorously against the Spaniards of the Low Countries, in order to afford sufficient occupation to the friends of the queen and the duke. Nevertheless, in the beginning of July *, Gaston of Orleans entered France on the side of Burgundy ; burned one of the suburbs of Dijon ; and, marching through Auvergne, proceeded towards Languedoc, which was the only province that openly favoured his cause. There, however, the young, the gallant, the chivalrous Montmorency commanded as governor, and, dissatisfied with Richelieu, as well as attached to the queen-mother by Marie des Ursins his wife, he had engaged to give his support to the duke of Orleans. The *maréchals de la Force* and Schomberg had been sent against the insurgents with a small army, while the king followed with a larger ; but the two marshals had divided, in hopes of enclosing the duke of Orleans between them. As soon as Montmorency had effected his junction with the duke, he perceived the error of his adversaries, and determined, if possible, to crush them separately before reinforcements could join them, and render the forces of either equal to those which he himself brought to the field. With this view he marched upon Castelnaudry, in the neighbourhood of which place Schomberg's force was found drawn out in battle array.† The count de Morets immediately charged on the part of the duke of Orleans at the head

* July 8. 1632.

† Sept 1. 1632.]

of some regiments of cavalry, and threw the royalist horse into confusion. Carried away by his ardour, Montmorency led up another regiment, in the hopes of completing the defeat of Schomberg's forces: but, as he was fighting hand to hand in the thickest of the battle, the royalists retreated; and a body of arquebusiers, which had been concealed in a hollow way, opened a fire upon the insurgent cavalry, which instantly killed the counts of Morets, Rieux, and Feuillade, and wounded Montmorency himself in several places. Another shot brought down his horse as he was attempting to escape, and he was taken prisoner by St. Preuil, a captain in the king's guards. No more than the advance guard of the insurgents had as yet been engaged; and the main body which the duke of Orleans commanded was equal, if not superior, in number to the whole force of Schomberg, which was already in considerable confusion. But whether in the battle or the council, Gaston of Orleans always abandoned his friends at the moment of need; and leaving Montmorency in the hands of the enemy, he retreated with the rest of his forces from the field. The whole of his infantry and a part of his cavalry now dispersed; and a number of the towns which had espoused his cause made submission to the king; for who would remain faithful to a man who was always a traitor to himself?

Louis in the mean time advanced with the cardinal into Languedoc; and the duke of Orleans, retreating upon Besiers, hesitated between throwing himself into Roussillon, and making his peace with his brother. Negotiations, however, were entered into with a view to the latter of these alternatives; and Gaston, who scrupled to submit to no degradation when he could thereby extricate himself from the consequences of his faults and his follies, concluded a disgraceful treaty with his brother, by which he bought immunity for himself and his favourites at the sacrifice of every thing like independence. The blackest spot of the whole, however, was the abandonment of Montmorency, whose

security might have been obtained by a mere demonstration of retiring to Roussillon in case of refusal. The cardinal, however, held out the hope that the duke would be spared if left entirely to the clemency of the king, and upon this reed did Gaston suffer the life of his friend to rest.

The duke of Orleans having been sent into Touraine, the king advanced to Besiers, where he called the States of Languedoc, and reproached them with the support they had afforded to his brother. He ordered also the trial of the bishops of Albi, Nismes, Uzés, and some other dioceses; and then proceeding to Toulouse, caused the duke of Montmorency to be brought before the parliament of that city, although his peerage gave him a right to be judged alone by the parliament of Paris. Having been taken in arms against the crown, but one sentence could be pronounced; and the only question was, whether the monarch should show mercy to a man who had rendered on various occasions signal services to the state? There can be no doubt that Louis was naturally of a cruel disposition; and, on the present occasion, a bracelet with a lady's portrait, which had been found upon the criminal, was employed to excite in the monarch's bosom jealousy, the most unpardoning of human passions. What were the motives of Richelieu's implacability towards the unhappy Montmorency does not appear, as at the moment of his greatest danger the duke had promised him the protection of which he then stood so much in need. St. Simon, too, a near relation of Montmorency, had been the best and most faithful friend that the cardinal had ever possessed; but still there can be no doubt that Richelieu counselled the king to severity, and Louis willingly followed his advice.

Nothing could show the obdurate insensibility of the two men more than the scenes which followed. Gallant, brave, honourable, polished, and gentle Montmorency possessed the love of all classes. All the nobles of the realm, all the officers of the crown, all the relations of

the criminal, cast themselves at the knees of the king, to implore his mercy for the last of a long line of noble ancestors who had so often been the staff of the monarchy. The brave, and the beautiful, and the good, raised their voices and mingled their tears in the same cause; and the common people, assembling in multitudes beneath the windows of the monarch's dwelling, shouted, in clamorous grief, "Mercy, mercy, for the gallant Montmorency!" The proud duke of Epemon hastening to the court, which he but seldom saw, besought the monarch, and the minister whom he despised and hated, to grant the life of one of the noblest men in France; and in a speech full of eloquence, — which affects those who read it, even in the present days, when the cold touch of time has frozen up our sympathies with the beings of that period, — set forth the many advantages which would follow mercy, and the many evils that might attend severity. De Launai, who was sent to demand from the prisoner his baton of field marshal and his order of the Holy Ghost, returning to the court, found Louis playing at chess in the midst of a large circle; and after repeating a humble and repentant, but not undignified, message from the duke, he cast himself in tears at the monarch's feet, beseeching him still to be merciful. The whole court, except Richelieu, followed his example: but the king and his minister stood unmoved and dark; and on the following morning Montmorency died in the court-yard of the castle by the hand of the executioner.

The bishops who had joined the party of the duke of Orleans were all punished in different degrees; and the nobles of Languedoc, who had fallen into the same error, had their woods cut down, and their châteaux rased by order of the inexorable minister. In the mean while the king returned to Paris, giving permission, however, that the queen and the whole court should accompany Richelieu on a sort of triumphal progress which the minister proposed to make through the south-western parts of France. But the health of the

cardinal was now shaken by the various fatigues he had undergone; and at Bordeaux he became so seriously ill that great hopes of his death were entertained throughout the whole country. The people of Bordeaux could scarcely restrain the expression of their joy within decent bounds; and balls were given in various parts of the town, while the cardinal was supposed to be at the point of death. At one of these balls Chateauneuf, the keeper of the seals, had the imprudence to appear, and to this error was very generally attributed his subsequent disgrace. Signs of amendment, however, soon became apparent: but the queen and the court had gone on before Richelieu was enabled to quit his chamber; and all his schemes for entertaining them in splendour at the château of Richelieu passed into nothing.

The news of the death of Montmorency struck the duke of Orleans with as much grief and shame as a prince so volatile and unconscientious could feel; and he complained loudly that he had been deceived, which doubtless he had been: but had not his honour and his friendship been as timid and inconstant as his policy, he would have taken means to insure that he was not deceived in an affair where the life of his noblest supporter was at stake. Rumours, however, reached him that Richelieu intended to pursue some more severe measures than had hitherto been employed against himself; and crossing the country in haste, he fled to Champagne and thence to Flanders, writing as he went a letter to the king, from Monterau ou faut Yonne, setting forth in strong terms the shameful deception which had been practised in regard to Montmorency; but exposing his own baseness and the folly of those loose favourites by whom he was surrounded, even while he displayed the remorseless treachery of the cardinal. Having arrived in Flanders he hastened to Brussels, where, however, he was for a time shunned by the queen-mother, who was justly offended that in the treaty he had concluded her interests had been totally orgotten.

She herself, however, laboured at this time under the imputation of countenancing enterprises little less wild, and far more disgraceful, than that which the duke had lately undertaken. While the king and the cardinal had been engaged in Loraine and Languedoc, ten men had been arrested at Paris in an attempt to carry off Madame de Combalet, the cardinal's niece; and amongst them were found one of the valets de chambre of Mary de Medicis, and the nephew of her favourite and confessor the father Chanteloupe. Another action of the same kind may be here mentioned, though it took place at a later period. When the cardinal was afterwards in Loraine*, a man was arrested under suspicious circumstances, and confessed that he had come, with two others, all formerly belonging to the queen's guard, for the purpose of assassinating the minister. On examination it was found that the horse which had brought him belonged to the queen-mother; and Richelieu, not sorry that the princess exposed herself to contempt by conniving at such practices, publicly sent back the horse, begging her to put a stop to the formation of similar schemes in her household.

Scarcely had the cardinal returned to Paris, when the keeper of the seals, Chateaufort, was dismissed from office; and, although it was not possible to find a charge against him, except servile obedience to the unjust will of Richelieu, he was sent a prisoner to the castle of Angouleme, while a number of his friends were either banished from the court or thrown into prison, in order to draw from them by menaces and tortures some foundation whereon to raise an accusation against the disgraced officer. Amongst the rest was the chevalier de Jars, who, after having been kept in the dungeons of the Bastille till the dress, in which he had been arrested nearly dropped from his person, was tried by judges selected for the purpose of condemning him. At the head of this corrupt tribunal was the ever infamous Lafemas; and the chevalier not only poured

* October, 1653.

forth the most bitter invective against that mean tool of the bad passions of Richelieu, but dared to attack unsparingly the cardinal himself. He was, as he expected, condemned; but meeting his fate with unconquerable firmness, he mounted the scaffold, proclaiming his own innocence and the infamy of those who had sentenced him, and laid his head as calmly upon the block as if it had been the pillow of his ordinary rest. At the moment, however, when he knelt, expecting the stroke of the executioner, the king's pardon was announced, and his gallant firmness met its just reward.

A solitary individual, possessing but little influence like de Jars, Richelieu could afford to respect and pardon; but the opposition which he encountered from the parliament of Paris was not to be forgiven. Shortly after the fall of Chateauneuf, the king proceeded to that court* for the purpose of suppressing the offices held therein by some of the weak counsellors of his brother, and he took the opportunity afforded by this visit to censure the whole body for a remonstrance they had made concerning the suspension of the president de Mesmes from his official functions. He addressed the members of that assembly in terms the most haughty and scornful, and informed them that he required them to obey instantly the expression of his will; at the same time directing that when in future he honoured the parliament with his presence, four of the presidents should receive him on their knees on the outside of the door of their hall,—a disgraceful act of servility, which was not indeed without precedent, but which had not been demanded for many years. Instead of restoring the president de Mesmes to the exercise of his functions, the remonstrance of the parliament only produced greater severity towards him; and he was soon afterwards arrested and imprisoned in the castle of Angiers.

While thus busied in crushing opposition in the iron hand of power, Richelieu did not forget to collect honours and rewards in his own person; and on the 14th

* April 11. 1633.

of May he was invested by the king with the order of the Holy Ghost. Nor did the cardinal neglect the interests of France in other countries, in which while these transactions had been taking place within the realm, various events of importance had occurred to call for the exertion of all the French minister's skill and activity. For some years the famous Gustavus Adolphus had given full employment to all the forces of the empire, and diverted them from the opposition which they would certainly have urged successfully against the encroachments of France: but at length that bold and skilful prince fell in the fatal battle of Lutzen *; and all Europe seemed to feel that on his life had depended the success of the protestant league which had been formed amongst the minor princes of Germany against the overgrown power of the emperor.

Richelieu now saw with alarm that Austria might soon be free, with her veteran troops and skilful generals, to retaliate on France many of the insults and injuries which she had been obliged to bear patiently while engaged in the struggle with the Swedish monarch. He applied himself therefore diligently not only to impede the progress of all negotiations for either a truce or a peace, the latter of which was now very generally spoken of in the north of Europe, but also to weaken the empire by attacking her allies so far as to counterbalance the loss of Gustavus, and to relieve the league from the necessity of submitting to terms with Austria. In pursuit of these objects Richelieu had to avoid two dangerous results. He neither wished to enter into actual hostilities with Austria, nor to call the indignation of all the catholics in Europe upon himself by giving too open support to the protestants. These difficulties, however, he overcame with wonderful skill and prudence; and he effected his purpose in favour of the protestants, still remaining at a point short of actual war with Austria. His first act was to send the marquis de Feuquieres to Heilbron, in order to confer with Oxenstiern, minister of the late king Gustavus, who there

* Nov. 6. 1632.

called a meeting of the protestant states ; and with him, as the representative of Christina, the young queen who had succeeded, a renewal of the former treaty with Sweden was concluded * ; in addition to which, Richelieu promised a subsidy of 1,000,000 of livres per annum, in order to carry on the war against the empire. At the same time, as a negotiation was in progress at the Hague for a peace, or at least for a truce between the United Provinces and the Spaniards of Flanders, Richelieu applied himself to put a stop to such a proceeding ; and offered a million per annum to the States as long as they continued the war in that quarter, together with a secret reinforcement of 6000 foot and 1000 horse, to be sent as privately as possible by sea.

In the mean while a proposal was made to the cardinal, which at first sight seemed to favour his plans, and which, had the armies and finances of France been in a prosperous state, it is probable he would have instantly accepted. A large party of the Flemish nobles, discontented with the Spanish government, offered to put France in possession of four of the strongest fortified towns on the frontiers of Flanders, and to excite a revolt in that country, if Richelieu would march troops to their aid. It was a tempting opportunity, but it could not be seized without bringing on an immediate war with Spain ; while, at the same time, another territory long coveted by France might be obtained without incurring a rupture either with the imperial or with the Spanish court. This was Loraine ; and by attacking that duchy at a moment when the empire could afford it no efficient aid, Richelieu saw that the immediate advantage would be gained of occupying a body of troops raised to take part in the war against Sweden, while more remotely, but no less certainly, Loraine would be annexed to France. He declined, therefore, the offers of the Belgian nobles, and prepared to attack the devoted duke of Loraine, for which a pretext was not wanting. That prince, of an

* April 9. 1633.

active and turbulent character, attached to the house of Austria, and hating as well as fearing France, had certainly committed one or two infractions of former treaties, and had endeavoured to aggrandise himself and serve the imperial court at the same time. But he had committed a still greater fault in the eyes of Richelieu, a fault that was the more unpardonable, inasmuch as he had contrived to conceal it for many months, and had therein outwitted the keen and suspicious minister himself.

The duke of Orleans on his retreat from France, after the death of Montmorency, had seen and been fascinated by the princess Margueret, sister of the duke. Her other brother, the cardinal de Lorraine, as bishop of Thoul, gave a dispensation for a private marriage, and authorised a monk to perform the ceremony; and before the demands of the king of France forced Gaston to quit Lorraine, he was united to the princess, in presence of a sufficient number of witnesses. This, added to other offences, furnished a pretence for attacking the family of Lorraine; and Richelieu commenced his proceedings by causing the duke to be summoned to do homage as a vassal of France for the territory of Bar, which on his non-appearance was confiscated by a decree of the parliament of Paris.* No sooner was the sentence pronounced, than Louis and the cardinal advanced against Lorraine at the head of an army, and first making themselves masters of Bar, threatened the whole of the duchy, in spite of manifold negotiations by which the duke endeavoured to stop their progress. Richelieu's principal demand was that Nancy, the capital of Lorraine, should be placed in the king's hands as a security against any infraction of the duke's engagements; but, as that unfortunate prince hesitated, the royal army advanced and laid siege to the place. In the mean time his military operations against the Swedes had been as unfortunate as his negotiations with France; and having no power to save his capital by force of arms, he

* July 30. 1633.

took the resolution of going to confer with the French monarch in person. Having obtained a passport, he proceeded at once to the head-quarters of the king ; but Richelieu was inflexible in regard to Nancy, and was only rendered the more so by knowing that the princess Margueret, who had married the duke of Orleans, was at that time within the walls.

Her brother, the cardinal, however, undertook to deliver her, while the duke negotiated ; and having obtained a pass for the purpose of withdrawing his carriages and some of his servants from the besieged city, he caused his sister to be dressed as a boy, and brought her thus out of the town. He himself dared not take the same route as herself, for fear of attracting attention ; but confiding her to the care of an old officer, and two soldiers disguised as lacqueys, he left her to pursue her course through the different parts of the royal camp, which was effected without interruption. Travelling all night, the unhappy girl arrived at Thionville the next morning at break of day, and thence proceeded to join her husband in Flanders, where she was received with joy and honour by the Spanish viceregal court. This successful stratagem only irritated Richelieu the more ; and the duke of Loraine, finding that nothing else would satisfy the minister, affected to yield Nancy, and wrote to the governor to surrender that town to the French generals. He had taken the precaution, however, before he placed himself in the power of the French king, to order his officers not to pay any attention to his written commands, unless accompanied by a private mark ; and, in hopes of some fortunate circumstance occurring to save his capital, he had not affixed the appointed sign to the order of delivering Nancy. In the meanwhile he would fain have retired from the French head-quarters ; but Richelieu occupied him with many polite formalities, and the duke perceived that the king of France bestowed upon him such a formidable guard of honour that it was impossible for him to quit the camp in private. Terrified lest the intention of the minister was to detain him altogether, he now

spoke to Richelieu on the subject; but the cardinal replied, with a calm smile, that as soon as he had given such an order as would really cause the surrender of Nancy, the honours to which he objected should be discontinued. As there appeared no other resource, the duke complied, and Nancy was accordingly delivered into the hands of the French.*

Satisfied with the acquisition of the whole territory of Bar, and the possession of the capital of Loraine, Richelieu prepared to return to Paris; but in the mean time the cardinal of Lorain^e proposed to resign the hat he had received from Rome, and marry madame de Combalet, the niece of Richelieu, in hopes thereby of rendering that minister more favourable to his brother. Richelieu eagerly caught at the means of allying his family to a sovereign house, but he had the wisdom to see that he could not sacrifice the interests of his master to his own personal aggrandisement; and though he offered an immense dowry with his niece, he yet made such severe stipulations in regard to Loraine, that the cardinal could not make up his mind to comply with them. The history of Loraine during several years is soon told: the exactions of the king of France became more and more grievous every day; fresh accusations were brought against the duke, concerning the marriage of his sister with the duke of Orleans, and, foreseeing the determination which the cardinal took soon after to strip him of all his territories, he executed a voluntary act of resignation in favour of his brother Nicolas Francis, cardinal of Loraine, who immediately assumed the title of duke. The new sovereign now attempted to negotiate with France on his own part, and still kept up an appearance of desiring to ally himself to the family of Richelieu; but the tone of that minister only became the more domineering and severe; and the duke having heard that in order to raise a pretence for new aggressions, the French marshal de la Force was about to seize upon the person of his cousin the princess Claude

* Sept. 24. 1633.

de Lorraine, who had some latent claims to the duchy, he suddenly took the determination of marrying her himself. No sooner, however, were his nuptials made public, than the French general marched against Luneville, where he then was, and investing that place, carried the duke and his bride prisoners to Nancy. They were treated with every outward mark of respect; but in reply to the duke's remonstrances, the cardinal de Richelieu ordered proceedings to be taken before the parliament against him, and his brother, for the pretended crime of having carried off the duke of Orleans by force, and obliged him to marry their sister. A summons was sent to duke Nicolas to appear in person; and well understanding what would be the result, that prince and his wife effected their escape from Nancy, and took refuge in Italy. The few strong towns which remained in Lorraine were besieged and captured by the French troops in a short space of time; the duchy of Bar was declared to be forfeited to the crown of France for the offences of the duke as a vassal of the king, and the rest of his territories were retained as a compensation for the expenses of the war.

While these transactions had been taking place in Lorraine, various other encroachments had been made upon the same line, so that France bade fair soon to have nothing for her boundary in that quarter but the Rhine. But it is necessary now to return to the more immediate proceedings of Richelieu, who followed the king to Paris soon after the surrender of Nancy*, and entered at once into negotiations concerning the return of the queen-mother and the duke of Orleans. In regard to the queen, however, there is every reason to believe he had determined from the first that she never should set foot in France again; and as some of the clergy had troubled the king's conscience in regard to keeping his mother in exile, Richelieu engaged various divines to satisfy him on that point, and contributed to put his mind at ease, by making such proposals to Mary, in an-

* October, 1633.

swer to her messages, as seemed very reasonable to the arbitrary mind of Louis, but which Richelieu well knew the queen-mother would never accept. One of his demands was always that Mary should give up two or three of her followers to the king's vengeance ; but on this point she resisted with noble firmness, though she was sometimes reduced almost to a state of want by the mean and infamous retention of her dowry. With regard to the duke of Orleans, however, Richelieu felt very differently, for there was in that prince's character a fund of follies and vices which the cardinal well knew he could render serviceable at any time to his own purposes ; and, consequently, while he not only ensured that the exile of the queen should not be brought to an end, but endeavoured to drive her into Italy, he made every effort to lure the duke of Orleans back to France. The means which proved successful were promises of great honours and dignities to the duke's favourite, Puylaurens ; but even his influence was for some time ineffectual, while the king persisted in demanding that the duke should consent to the nullification of his marriage with Margueret of Lorraine. Gaston, however, held out with a degree of firmness which he never showed on any other occasion, and at length it was agreed that the matter should be dropped till he returned to France. A treaty was then immediately concluded, and the duke came back. Puylaurens was loaded with favours, raised to the rank of peer of France, and married to a cousin of the cardinal : all the other followers of the duke were declared free from the sentences and proceedings taken against them during their absence ; and Gaston himself received many honors and presents, in order to render him more pliant to the will of his brother in regard to the dissolution of his marriage.

The princess Margueret had been left behind in Flanders ; and Richelieu, who could not bear that his sovereign's brother should remain united to the sister of princes whom he had injured and despoiled, now hoped

that, remote from her influence, the weak duke would consent to see his marriage annulled. But Gaston still held out, professing that deep respect and affection for the princess with which no one else had ever been able to inspire him ; and declaring that nothing should ever make him commit an act so much against his honour and his conscience as that required of him. This constancy Richelieu could not believe to be natural in a prince of so unstable a character, and attributing it to the influence of Pulyaurens, he had that favourite arrested, notwithstanding the alliance which he had contracted with the family of Du Plessis ; and most probably would have brought his head to the block, had not Pulyaurens died shortly after in prison. The duke, however, persisted, and no entreaties could move him upon the point of his marriage.

In the mean time Richelieu showed no inactivity in regard to the external relations of France. As long as the efforts of Sweden and of the princes of the protestant league afforded the best and only means of diverting the attention of Austria from the proceedings of the French armies in Loraine, Richelieu had continued to support them by every means within his reach ; but about this time a new method of depressing, or at least of dividing, the imperial power presented itself, and Richelieu, neglecting the Swedes, hastened to seize it. Wallenstein, the famous imperial general, the rival of Gustavus in military renown, and the idol of his own soldiers, conceived the rash design of using his sovereign's forces to dismember his territories. How far Richelieu had a share in suggesting or encouraging these ideas cannot be discovered ; but it is generally known, that he entertained some private communications with the imperial general, and it is supposed gave him the firmest assurances of support from France in any attempt he might make to render himself king of Bohemia. Wallenstein's treason, however, was discovered before his plans were mature, and he was slain in the fortress of Egra, ere he had begun the career of active

guilt, which there can be no doubt he had laid out for himself.*

Disappointed in this negotiation, Richelieu turned again to the Swedes; but fortune was no longer so favourable to that nation. Many slight reverses were befalling them; and Austria, pushing her advantages, endeavoured to keep France engaged with apprehensions for her own territory, while the imperial troops completed the ruin of the Swedish armies in Germany. The Spaniards threatened a descent in Provence or Languedoc, the duke of Savoy was understood to be engaged in preparations for joining them, some demonstrations were made on the side of Loraine to the same effect, and all showed that Austria was ready to take advantage of the turn of fortune which had occurred in her favour. Richelieu was determined to temporise as long as possible; but at length the duke of Weimar and general Horn, the Swedish commanders, were defeated at Nordlingen†; and it became evident that the protestant league would be crushed by the power of the empire if France did not interfere with some vigorous assistance. The cardinal then saw that the time for petty encroachments was past, and that the moment for action had arrived; and in a council which was immediately held upon the disaster at Nordlingen, he advised the king to give the most powerful support that the country could afford to the enemies of the house of Austria. He met with difficulties on which he had not calculated. To the eyes of Richelieu all sects were confounded in his wide views of policy. Not so, however, with the king; and though the monarch assented to the necessity of succouring the protestant league, he would not be persuaded to take the command in person of an army which was destined to fight the battles of heretics against the members of his own church.

A short coldness ensued between the king and his minister; but Richelieu, certain of his policy, pur-

* Feb. 15. 1634.

† Sept 6 1634.

sued his own views ; and prepared to attack the house of Austria at once in Germany, Flanders, and Italy. The *maréchal de la Force*, who occupied *Lorraine*, was ordered to advance upon the Rhine ; and a new treaty was concluded between France and the protestant league, whereby the Swedes gave up to their Gallic confederate the town of *Philipsburg*, which formed a strong outwork to that line of places whereof *Richelieu* had despoiled the house of *Lorraine* and the archbishop of *Treves*. Even the late misfortunes of her allies proved at this moment advantageous to France, and a number of towns in *Alsace* and the palatinate, which the protestant league had possessed, but were now obliged to abandon, cast themselves into the hands of France, lest they should otherwise fall into the power of the empire.

In the mean time the *maréchal de la Force* advanced to the banks of the great river with 30,000 veteran troops, and fresh levies were ordered throughout France, to continue with vigour a war which was now inevitable. *Philipsburg* was garrisoned ; and, with but little skill or consideration, the French generals filled it, though one of their most exposed posts, with military stores and treasure. They had possessed it, however, only a few months when it was taken by stratagem.* *Treves* also fell in the same manner into the hands of the Spaniards, who carried off and imprisoned the elector, as an opponent of the house of Austria. The possession of *Spires*, which the French obtained about the same time, did not at all compensate for the loss of the two former fortresses.

It would be impossible and irrelevant in a work like this to follow all the operations of the armies on the Rhine ; suffice it to say, that sickness amongst the troops, and a system of peculation amongst the colonels and captains of the French forces, reduced them to a degree of weakness which prevented the active efforts on which *Richelieu* had calculated. A number of the German princes, too, abandoned the league, and made

* January 24. 1635.

their peace with Austria ; and even Sweden herself, deprived of the inspiring energy of her great king, for a time pursued the war with languor and without success. On the whole, Austria had considerably the advantage in the campaigns of 1635, and at one period serious apprehensions were entertained of seeing the imperial standard advance against the capital of France. In the meanwhile Richelieu was suffering considerably from a very painful though not dangerous disease, which prevented his personal inspection and active mind from supplying the wants and remedying the faults of others. He exerted himself, however, as much as it was possible for him to do in the condition in which he then was, and found means to supply, with a liberal hand, the allies and generals of the state he ruled. •

Although the failure of the French troops and the loss of Philipsburg and Treves were subjects of deep mortification to Richelieu, several events occurred to gratify his vanity, which was insatiable of concessions. The count de Soissons, of whom, as a prince of considerable abilities and affinity to the throne, he had always shown himself jealous, had avoided him in public, on account of the precedence which the cardinal claimed in right of his clerical rank ; but he now in his ill health visited him, and showed him many marks of attention. On all great occasions, too, the councils were held at the cardinal's own house at Ruel, instead of at the king's residence at St. Germain, and the monarch himself attended the meeting at the dwelling of his minister. Besides all these marks of consideration, the celebrated chancellor of Sweden, during a visit which he made to Paris, in order to arrange some more effectual and energetic mode of action *, yielded precedence to the cardinal, saying, that though he did not recognise his clerical dignity, he did recognise his extraordinary talents.

Still in the midst of all these proceedings, Richelieu and the king pursued their purpose of annulling the marriage

* October, 1635.

of the duke of Orleans with obdurate perseverance ; they gained the parliament of Paris to declare the contract void, and a large body of divines paid court to Richelieu by pronouncing against it ; but Gaston himself remained firm, and the pope could by no means be induced to sanction the opinion expressed by the French bishops. In the meanwhile the queen-mother used all her influence in support of the marriage, and eagerly upheld the cause of the princess Margueret at the pontifical court. She also, probably in the vain hope of rendering herself of importance, endeavoured to bring about a reconciliation between France and Austria. Her efforts, however, in no respect were very successful. The pope determined upon his course by motives of policy which were little affected by her declamations, and the emperor and the king of France pursued their warfare against each other as if such a woman as Mary de' Medicis had not existed.

The failure of the French and Swedish operations on the Rhine was, during the early part of the year 1635, compensated in some measure by the success of a French army which had been sent to co-operate with the prince of Orange in an attack upon the Spanish Low Countries. But the tide of events soon changed ; and, after being forced to raise the siege of Louvain, the Dutch and French forces separated, and the latter regained with difficulty and loss the frontier of their native country. While these transactions had been taking place in the north of Europe, the president de Bellievre, ambassador extraordinary on the part of France, entered into a treaty with three of the petty princes of Italy, for the purpose of attacking the Spaniards in the Milanese. France, besides the troops which remained amongst the Grisons for the purpose of securing the Valteline, agreed to send 17,000 men into Italy under the command of the *maréchal de Crequi* ; and the dukes of Savoy, Parma, and Mantua promised a contingent of 16,000 more. In case of necessity, the forces on both parts were to be increased. As soon as the treaty was concluded, and be-

fore the duke of Savoy was prepared, Crequi entered the territories of Spain, and, after some trifling successes, attacked the town of Valenza on the Po. The duke of Parma hastened to support him with his full contingent, and on the march defeated a corps of Spanish troops sent to intercept him: but the duke of Savoy did not appear; and before the lines of circumvallation could be completed, the Spaniards had thrown into the town large reinforcements and considerable supplies. At length the duke of Savoy joined the army; but dissension now arose between him and Crequi: their measures were feeble; and, after suffering a defeat from a Spanish army which came to relieve Valenza, the French and Savoyards abandoned the siege, losing their cannon and a great part of their baggage. All these evil tidings from every quarter greatly discouraged Richelieu, who, knowing that his favour had been built up principally upon the basis of success, feared that it would fall with the first reverses. The king too appeared so much mortified, that Bouthilliers concealed from him, in more than one instance, the worst points in the situation of the French armies; but Louis, having discovered the deceit, broke forth into a violent fit of anger, and forbade the secretary to open any despatches but in his own presence.

Some consolation, however, was derived from the successes of the gallant duc de Rohan in the Valteline, where with very inferior forces he defeated two small armies sent to clear the passes and reinforce the troops in the Milanese; but to the mind of the king, advantages gained by a protestant general, even in his own cause, did not afford unmixed gratification.

Thus ended the campaigns of 1635, in all instances, except in the Valteline, to the disadvantage of France. The consequences, also, of great undertakings without success were, that the people murmured at the burdens which they were obliged to support, and for which they obtained no compensation, even of an imaginary kind. The finances of the state were exhausted,

new impositions were decreed, and a number of new offices created and sold. Against the last-named abuse the parliament ventured to remonstrate; but the government of the cardinal had for its first principle despotism, and the refractory members were punished, some with exile, some with suspension from their functions. All were forced to comply with his will; and the parliament, unable to resist, yielded step by step to his exactions.

In Italy the warlike operations of the next year opened with better prospects. The duke of Savoy and the *maréchal de Crequi* obtained several advantages over the Spaniards, and nearly established a communication with the *duc de Rohan*, in the *Valteline*; but before the end of the year these successes were counterbalanced, even in that quarter, by the Spaniards reducing almost the whole territories of *Parma*, and by the death of the brave and skilful *maréchal de Thoiras*, who was killed by a musket-ball at the siege of a petty town on the *Tesino*. To the north and east of France accumulated disasters threatened to end the ministry of *Richelieu* by the ruin of his country. In the beginning of the year the States of *Holland* showed a disposition to renew the negotiations for a peace with the empire, which had been broken off by the machinations of France; but the French agents again interposed, and by great promises, which were not fulfilled, induced the States to continue the war. Nevertheless the party, which desired a peace, contrived to embarrass the proceedings of the prince of *Orange*, so that his operations against the Spanish forces were little more than defensive. The armies of the cardinal infant, therefore, were now left free to act in whatever manner he chose to direct them; and, reinforced by the troops under *Piccolomini* and prince *Thomas of Savoy*, he prepared to carry the war into France itself.

In the meanwhile, however, *Richelieu* employed the warlike cardinal *de la Valette* in throwing supplies and reinforcements into the towns of *Alsace* which had fallen into the hands of the French, and at the same time he

despatched the prince de Condé to lead a small army into Franche Comté, which was then independent of the crown of France, and which had bound itself, under a treaty guaranteed by the Swiss cantons, to remain neuter between the French and Imperialists. This treaty, it would seem, had been violated; and, appeasing the Swiss by sums of money, Richelieu speculated upon adding Franche Comté to Lorraine. The prince de Condé therefore entered the territory, and laid siege to Dole, expecting that it would speedily surrender; but the garrison made a vigorous resistance, and called the imperial troops to their aid; on the approach of whom Condé retreated into Burgundy, whither he was shortly after followed by the enemy's forces, which ravaged the whole province, notwithstanding all that la Valette and the duke of Weimar could do to check them.

It was not alone, however, the approach of the imperial army which compelled Condé to raise the siege of Dole, but events were taking place in the north of France which debarred him from all hope of support. Trusting that the prince of Orange would find means to employ the whole forces of the Spaniards in the Netherlands, Richelieu, in order to swell the armies of Alsace and Franche Comté, had left the frontier of Picardy but slenderly guarded. The Spanish generals instantly took advantage of this oversight; and the duke of Feria being left to keep the prince in check, the rest of the troops in Flanders poured down upon the Somme. As they proceeded, La Chapelle, Catelet, and a number of other places fell, with scarcely any resistance; and the count de Soissons, who was instantly despatched to oppose their progress with an army infinitely inferior in every point, could do nothing but throw garrisons and supplies into some of the towns likely to be attacked, and harass the enemy as they advanced. They effected the passage of the Somme*, and the count was forced to retreat upon Com-

* August 1. 1636.

piegne, while the Spaniards assailed Roye and Corbie, both places capable of long defence.

In order to ensure more vigorous resistance in the governors of other towns than had been shown by those which the Spanish troops had first conquered, Richelieu had caused proceedings to be instituted against those officers who appeared to have neglected their duty, and had obtained sentence of death against them. But, nevertheless, Roye and Corbie yielded as soon as the rest had done, and consternation spread through the court and the capital of France. The Parisians imagined that the Spanish troops were already at their gates; the king, giving himself up to despair, became petulant, wavering, and melancholy; and the lower orders made the streets ring with execrations upon the cardinal, to whom they attributed, in the madness of fear and disappointment, the purpose of delivering Paris to the enemy.

Though suffering in body, and, we may well believe, depressed in mind, Richelieu showed the firmness which his situation required. Instantly coming to the capital, he proceeded to give the necessary orders for collecting forces and stores to oppose the progress of the enemy; and met the murmurs of the people by riding out into the most crowded streets unaccompanied by the guard which usually attended him. His measures, too, were prompt and vigorous; and every one was called upon equally to make a sacrifice for his country in its moment of peril. All the young unemployed men in the neighbourhood of Paris capable of bearing arms were enrolled and disciplined in haste. Those persons who had more than one male servant, those who had many apprentices, were enjoined to send one to the muster at St. Denis, and every person who possessed more than a pair of carriage horses was required to give up one for the service of the state. All gentlemen and persons exempt from the tax called the *taille*, as well as the officers of the king's household, were commanded to appear in arms at the

rendezvous in six days, and the siege of Dole having, as we have said, been raised, a part of the disciplined forces of the prince de Condé were recalled, to give consistency to the hasty levies thus brought into the field. Corbie surrendered to the Spaniards on the 12th of August, and on the 1st of September 52,000 men, and 40 pieces of cannon, were assembled at St. Denis to oppose the enemy.

A greater danger, however, awaited Richelieu than that which the Spanish arms presented. In the eager energy which, conquering all his own bodily infirmities, enabled him to bear the fatigues of such rapid preparations, he forgot the usual tone of deference with which he treated the king, and reproached him with the pusillanimous timidity and despair which he displayed. Louis resented his boldness, and treated him with extreme coldness; and Richelieu soon saw that the whole court was eagerly watching to take advantage of the next rash step he should make, to precipitate him from the height he had gained. The daily bad tidings which arrived from Burgundy and Italy increased the ill-humour of the monarch; and the appointment of the duke of Orleans to command the army under the king, with the count de Soissons as his lieutenant-general, did not at all reconcile Louis to the conduct of his minister. Both those princes the monarch detested cordially; and, though the favourable, and perhaps the right view of Richelieu's motives in nominating them to such stations of honour, was to engage all parties heartily in the service of their country at a time when disunion would have proved ruinous, yet Louis appears to have felt more personally incensed at this measure having been thrust upon him than at any act of Richelieu's individual ambition. In the meanwhile the courtiers did all they could to encourage the monarch's discontent and to point it against the cardinal; and, giving way to despair at length, the minister is represented as having fallen into a state of apathetic gloom, which would have

ended in his resignation and consequent ruin, had he not been encouraged and supported by the well-known capuchin, Pere Joseph, a man of wild schemes and ill-considered enterprises, but of a shrewd and penetrating mind and daring, determined spirit.

During all the cabals at the court, the army marched on ; and the Spaniards, unable to keep the field against the superior power of France, retreated before it, throwing strong garrisons, however, into Roye and Corbie, in hopes that reinforcements from the Low Countries would enable them to return and relieve those places, if besieged. Against such an event, however, Richelieu had already guarded by pressing the prince of Orange, in terms that he could not mistake, to commence more active operations on the northern frontier of Flanders. Roye surrendered to the royal forces after a very short siege, and the army then marched against Corbie, which, better fortified, and furnished with a stronger garrison, promised to hold out longer. It was therefore at first agreed to reduce it by blockade ; but Richelieu, having learned that there was a scarcity of corn and flour in the place, called a council of war, to inquire what might best be done. The *maréchal de Chatillon* proposed to pursue more active measures ; but the count de Soissons opposed his opinion, declaring that it would be impossible in that rainy season to reduce a place of the strength of Corbie by any means but famine. Richelieu, however, replied ; and, showing that the garrison, if left to the slow means of blockade, would feel themselves bound to hold out while any provisions remained, but if closely pressed by a regular siege while their hopes were already depressed by a feeling of scarcity, would in all probability quickly surrender, he overbore all opposition, and three regular attacks were accordingly commenced. The views of the cardinal proved to be just ; not long after the batteries had opened upon Corbie the garrison demanded to treat, and finally capitulated, to the joy and honour of the minister. His genius had once more triumphed,

contrary to the opinions of men more experienced in the art of war than himself, and he at once resumed the firmness which had for a time abandoned him, and the haughtiness which in his apprehensions he had laid aside.

While directing the siege of Corbie, however, Richelieu had very nearly terminated his career by the dagger of the assassin. The duke of Orleans and the count de Soissons had both met with many an insult and disappointment from his hands; and though they had never heretofore been upon terms of great friendship, they became more united after they had shared in the command of the royal army, and found a strong bond of union in their detestation of the minister. It is probable that they, as most other men do when actuated by strong passions, believed that they were justified by circumstances in employing evil means to attain a good result. They most likely looked upon the conduct of Richelieu, in depressing the great nobility, and stifling in the Herculean grasp of power the Titan of rebellion, in a light under which we can no longer view his behaviour; and they probably attributed to the effects of his individual ambition, perhaps even to his incapacity, the reverses which had attended the French arms, and the successes of the enemy. However that may be, they conspired together to free France from his dominion; and trusting that if they remained firmly united to each other all the powerful families, which Richelieu had ranged amongst his enemies, would join to support them, they proceeded to consider whether it would be better to employ the gentler means of remonstrating with the king, and of boldly showing him the state to which the minister had reduced the country, or to pursue the surer, but more criminal course of ending the ministry of the cardinal by his death. Both the duke of Orleans and the count de Soissons were surrounded by rash and unprincipled men, and the more violent measure met with support which caused it to be adopted.

Richelieu, while the siege proceeded, remained near Corbie, and the king had taken up his quarters in a chateau in the vicinity of Amiens. Thus when a council was necessarily called, the minister proceeded for a time to the city of Amiens itself, where the king joined him, retiring after the discussions were over, and leaving his minister to see the details of whatever had been determined executed properly. This afforded opportunities, one of which the conspirators determined to seize. Four of the most resolute followers of the count and the duke being chosen to perpetrate the assassination, were informed of the plot; and a number of attached officers and soldiers were called upon to follow these two princes to Amiens, on the very next meeting of the council, in order to afford them support when the deed was done.

The council met as usual, shortly after these arrangements had been made; and when the general discussions were over the king rose and retired, leaving the cardinal with the conspirators. One of the four assassins then approached, and pretending to have something to communicate to the two princes, asked in a whisper if they still held their purpose. They answered in the affirmative, and the officer made signs for his companions to approach, which they did, but remained waiting for a sign, which was to be given by the duke of Orleans. Richelieu, accompanied by the duke and the count, had by this time reached the foot of the first flight of steps leading from the council chamber towards the court, and nothing could have saved him had the signal been made; but at that moment the heart of the duke of Orleans failed him, and leaving the minister and the count de Soissons abruptly, he ran up stairs to the hall they had just left, followed by one of the four, who in vain attempted to persuade him to return and seize an opportunity which might never occur again. In a state of agitation which deprived him of all powers of thought or action, the duke walked up and down the hall, answering in broken and incoherent sentences; and

in the mean time, Richelieu seeing a degree of bustle and hesitation-amongst the people who surrounded him, hurried down to the court, and getting into his carriage returned in safety to his own quarters.

It was long before he became aware of the true nature of the plot against him ; but the conspirators having failed to execute the attempt upon his life, now tried the other means they had proposed, and endeavoured to ruin his credit with the king. At the same time they wrote to the dukes of Epernon, Retz, Bouillon, and some others, requesting them to come to the court and join all their efforts together for the overthrow of the minister ; but it rarely happened that any extensive correspondence took place in France without some of the letters falling into the hands of Richelieu, and he thus became aware of the new designs of the conspirators.

His credit with the king was but too lately re-established to permit of his pursuing any very harsh measures for the purpose of crushing his enemies ; and as the simplest means of freeing himself from them, he determined to induce them to absent themselves from the court. Shortly after the fall of Corbie, the two princes proceeded to Paris by command of the king, while Richelieu remained in Picardy ; but scarcely had they arrived in the capital when they received private information that orders had been given to arrest them. Such a measure was so like those which Richelieu ordinarily pursued, that both the duke of Orleans and the count de Soissons took fright ; and the one set out in haste for his town of Blois, while the other fled to the duke of Bouillon at Sedan.*

Richelieu, who had contrived the whole, smiled at the success of his plan ; and the king, astonished at their flight, wrote to both, declaring that nothing could be more false than that any intention of arresting them had ever been entertained. Each, however, refused to

* Nov. 20. 1636.

return ; and while Richelieu determined to leave at a distance from the court the count de Soissons, whose firmness and talents were dangerous to his power, he induced the king to march against the duke of Orleans, very certain that the approach of the royal army would reduce him to any base concession. This step was the more necessary, as Spain was eagerly courting the two princes to enter into a league with her against the minister. But the duke of Orleans, as Richelieu anticipated, yielded every thing, and made the most abject submission as soon as the king arrived at Orleans ; while the count de Soissons having obtained permission to remain without the limits of the kingdom, and yet to enjoy all his revenues, emoluments, and honours unimpeached, broke off the negotiations with Spain, and left the minister free to act with increasing vigour. Mary de Medicis in the mean time remained in exile, notwithstanding some exertions in her favour which were made by the court of England at the beginning of the year 1637 ; and Richelieu was not at all sorry to see that Louis was daily losing some part of the scruples which he had formerly entertained in regard to leaving his mother in a state of banishment.

The campaign of this year proved far more favourable to the arms of France than that which had preceded it. It is true that the duke of Parma was forced to make his peace with the Spaniards in Italy ; but their farther efforts were checked by Crequi in Savoy, and a French fleet, after making a descent upon Sardinia, retook the islands of Hieres, which had been captured by the Spaniards some time before. In Languedoc also, the Spaniards, who had invaded that province and attacked Leucate, were surprised during the night by the son of marshal Schomberg, and forced to fly with disgrace and loss* ; and they were also driven back from Guyenne by the duc de la Valette. In the north still greater successes attended the royal armies ; Landreci was taken,

* Sept. 28 1637

and La Capelle reconquered ; and after various sieges in the territory of Luxemburg, Danvilliers surrendered to the maréchal de Chatillon, while Breda fell into the power of the prince of Orange.

Many other successes of minor import were gained in Franche Comté, and the result of the hostilities against the house of Austria would have been entirely favourable, had not the Valteline been lost to France by a course of the most extraordinary negligence on the part of Richelieu himself. The duc de Rohan had, as we have seen, been sent to take the command of a small French army in the territory of the Grisons, with orders to raise a larger force amongst the people of that country, promising them their pay from France, and the long contested sovereignty of the Valteline as their reward. He had defeated the imperial troops in four general actions, and preserved that important territory through the hottest period of the war ; but notwithstanding all his remonstrances, he could not obtain either permission to fulfil the promises made to the Grisons in regard to the Valteline, nor money to pay his troops and buy provisions. Murmurs, remonstrances, and threats now began to be heard amongst the Grisons ; and the duc de Rohan, as he shows by a manifesto published afterwards, applied again and again for money and instructions. He received neither, however, and very often his letters remained unanswered. At length, seeing that an insurrection would be the infallible consequence, and having no power to resist it, he wrote to beg permission to retire once more to Venice, whence he had been unwillingly drawn to command in the Valteline. The permission was granted, but at the same time he was informed that he must hold himself responsible for all that occurred in the circuit of his command during his absence ; and of course he determined to remain. By every means in his power he endeavoured to reconcile the people to the treatment they received, and at all events had some success in suspending the progress of insurrection. The agents of

Austria, however, were not inactive ; a treaty was concluded at Innsbruck, between the archduke Leopold and deputies from the Grisons, by which far greater advantages were secured to them than those which had been promised by France ; and a general rising of the whole country took place. The destruction of the French troops now seemed inevitable ; the Swiss, who were mingled with them, refused to give them assistance against the Grisons, and the duc de Rohan found himself besieged in what was called the fort du Rhin, with a garrison of which two thirds were Swiss, without money, and with provisions for fifteen days. Under these circumstances, in order to gain time for Richelieu to act as he might think fit, the duke entered into a treaty with the Grisons, whereby he agreed to evacuate their territory at the end of twenty days, and to remain a prisoner in their hands till the conditions were executed. He then despatched messengers to Richelieu, to inform him of what had taken place. As the minister still kept silence, the fortresses were surrendered to the Grisons ; and the duke being set at liberty, led the handful of troops which he commanded back to the frontiers of France, whence, having resigned his commission, without trusting himself in the hands of the cardinal, he retired to Geneva to hear the result. The court exclaimed loudly against the conduct which had been rendered necessary by its own negligence ; but the Grisons themselves had borne testimony to the worth of the duke, in a manner which afforded a full compensation for the censure of Richelieu, the principal personages of the canton having accompanied him to the frontier of their territory with every sign of reverence and regard.

About this period died Victor, duke of Savoy, and his widow, sister of the French king, was left regent of the duchy during the infancy of her children. Her first measures were wise and cautious. She equally held aloof from the parties of France and Spain ; and while she took measures to prevent the return to Piedmont

of the cardinal of Savoy, and prince Thomas, his brother, both of whom were strongly attached to the Spanish cause, she discovered and frustrated the designs of Emery the French ambassador, who had contrived a scheme for seizing upon her and her infant son, in order to subjugate the territories of Savoy entirely to France. It would seem, however, that she yielded so far to the feelings of filial affection, as to seek eagerly to induce the king of France to recall their mother from exile. This, indeed, could only be done by effecting the overthrow of Richelieu, and she employed her own confessor to bring over the Jesuit Caussin, who filled the same post near the person of Louis, to the cause of the queen-mother. The one Jesuit easily persuaded the other; and Caussin worked so successfully on the mind of the weak king, that Louis seems to have deliberated seriously on the idea of dismissing his minister. It appears certain that he demanded of the priest the name of some person capable of filling the place of the cardinal; but the good father had forgotten that important point, and had no answer prepared. Indeed, it would have been difficult at that moment to have found a name which could be substituted for that of Richelieu. The confessor, after some hesitation, fixed in his own mind upon the duke of Angoulême, and proposed the office to him; but the duke, who knew that the king was not to be trusted, and that the minister was to be dreaded, lulled the good priest with a vague reply, and setting off in haste for Ruel, informed the cardinal of the whole project. Richelieu soon removed from the mind of the king the unfavourable impression which had been made in regard to his conduct; and the two confessors were arrested and thrown into remote prisons as the reward of their activity.

As I have before said, it were impossible in a work like this to follow through all the minute details the wars in which Richelieu was now plunged, though their success or failure affected in a high degree his private life. The great political transactions also of those times form more the subject of general history than of indivi-

dual biography, and it is only requisite to touch upon these topics in as far as they influenced the situation of the minister of Louis XIII. Even under this restriction the details must be few and brief. After manifold efforts, threats, and persuasions, Richelieu induced the young regent of Savoy to renew the offensive and defensive treaty which had existed between her husband and France; and though she thus called the arms of the Spaniards into Piedmont, they were not so successful as might have been expected from the inferiority of the troops of Savoy, and the scantiness of the aid afforded by France. Early in the year 1638, the duc de Rohan received an order at Geneva to betake himself to Venice; but the duke pleaded the difficulty of obtaining a passage, and joining the army of the duke of Weimar, although he took no absolute command, is supposed, by the advice which his experience afforded, to have contributed greatly to the success of that prince during the early part of the campaign. At length, in a general engagement which took place between the imperialists and the allied troops on the 28th February, he fell severely wounded, fighting as a volunteer at the head of the left wing of Weimar's army. He died of his wounds not long after*, having received from the king of France, in the form of a letter of thanks, a late tribute to his talents and his virtues.†

It is curious to remark how the most pitiful weaknesses often alloy high qualities or great talents,—how falsehood, prevarication, and petty deceits debase by their admixture the mighty efforts of far-reaching policy,—and how small jealousies or mean vanities render lamentably human the otherwise divine conceptions of the most powerful intellects. No man who ever forgot in his ambition that goodness is an essential part of greatness has yet in the world's history shown himself devoid

* March 23 1638.

† It may be necessary to remark, that a letter, without a signature, addressed to the prince de Condé, published, I believe, in all editions of the *memoires du duc de Rohan*, and generally attributed to him, was written many months after his death by the duc de la Valette, and refers to events in which Rohan had no share whatever.

of the pettiest frailties that degrade mankind, however vast and surprising may have been his genius in other respects. In Richelieu such blemishes were inordinate, and amongst them none was more conspicuous than his jealousy even of those who were infinitely inferior to himself. Such was the case in regard to Olivarez, the contemporary minister of Spain; and it is generally supposed that the example of that statesman, who had invaded France at various points, had a greater tendency to lead Richelieu on to an invasion of the Peninsula than any considerations of good policy or expediency. Certain it is that the first expedition against Spain itself was equally ill conceived and ill executed. The commander-in-chief was the prince de Condé, who on more than one occasion had received a signal check when he thought himself sure of victory; and the two principal inferior officers were the archbishop of Bordeaux, whose profession was certainly not that of arms, and the duke de la Valette, who, though brave and occasionally successful, had no very great military experience. The place which these officers were directed to attack was Fontarabia, in which the people were attached strongly to the house of Spain, and which could only be captured after a long siege and great difficulty. The fortifications were good; the officers who had thrown themselves into it were determined and able; and even if captured, France could hardly expect to hold it for any length of time.

To attack it, however, was the determination of the cardinal de Richelieu; and the prince de Condé's march began on the 30th of June. The first operations of the forces were extremely successful. The archbishop of Bordeaux captured or burned a great number of the Spanish ships at different points of the coast, and the city was besieged on all sides. But divisions soon took place amongst the commanders of the French forces. The Spanish army advanced to relieve the place, and an attempt to carry the town by storm was made before the breach was

practicable. The duke de la Valette, who commanded at that point, recalled his men somewhat hastily ; and the prince of Condé, having severely censured his conduct, ordered him to give up his quarters to the archbishop of Bordeaux, who undertook to take the town by storm in three days. Before these three days were at an end, however, the admiral of Castile, who commanded the Spanish forces, advanced against the French lines. His army was inferior in number, but the quarters of the *maréchal de la Force* were soon in the hands of the Spaniards ; the cannon of the French were turned against their flying troops ; the prince of Condé, seeing disorder and confusion spreading rapidly, ran away, and made his escape by sea. The archbishop of Bordeaux did the same, only taking the precaution to embark his troops also ; and the duke de la Valette was the only one who remained ; but having given up his quarters to the archbishop, he arrived too late on the scene of action to restore the fortune of the day. He succeeded, however, in saving the rest of the army ; and though obliged to leave the cannon and baggage in the hands of the enemy, he effected his retreat with some degree of order and but little loss.*

It nevertheless soon became apparent that the duke was to be the victim sacrificed in this instance to atone for the failure of the cardinal's scheme ; and having received intimation of his danger, he fled to England, whence he wrote a bitter and sarcastic letter to the prince of Condé, accusing him both of partiality and a want of courage. These transactions gave rise to one of the most glaring infractions of the laws of the country and the rights of the people which Richelieu ever committed. Proceedings were immediately commenced against the duke, who was charged with treason and cowardice ; but instead of submitting his cause to the parliament of Paris, which was the lawful court, Richelieu named commissioners, part of whom were

chosen from the council of state, part from the parliament ; and caused the trial to take place at St. Germain, where the king then was. The members of the parliament refused generally to deliberate in the cause of a peer except in Paris, and in the usual forms ; and every sort of threat and intimidation was used to force them to comply. With almost all, these means were ultimately successful ; and the majority not only proceeded to the trial, but also condemned the duke to death, as the cardinal desired. We must, however, except the president, Bellievre, who held out to the last, resolved at all risks to do his duty as a citizen and a magistrate. The king sat at the head of the table during the trial, the council of state pronounced the sentence ; and in short, every thing was done to outrage both the forms, and the principles of justice ; but the duke was fortunately safe in England, and after Richelieu's death the parliament reversed the sentence and restored him to his honours and estates.

In the capital an event had occurred in the meanwhile which might have had the most important effects upon the career of the cardinal de Richelieu ; but which, through the weakness of the king and the skill of the minister, instead of producing his overthrow, tended only to establish him more firmly in power. In the beginning of the year 1638 the queen Anne of Austria, after having been married and childless during twenty-two years, perceived that she was pregnant ; and as her enmity to the cardinal was well known, the great influence which her situation was likely to give her became matter of alarm to the minister. No ill office had been wanting on his part to render the queen odious in the eyes of her husband, and he now took means to awaken the suspicions of the king against her on account of a secret correspondence which she carried on with her relations in Spain and in the Low Countries. This correspondence, it would appear, was entirely confined to matters of private interest, or to endeavours to arrange some terms of peace which would be acceptable

to both kingdoms ; and it was conducted through the intervention of various persons, amongst whom was a nun of the Val de Grace. The good sister received the letters of the Spanish viceroy of Flanders, and placed them in a closet, from which the queen, when she had finished her devotions, took them ; and the answers were remitted in the same manner ; but the whole arrangement was discovered by Richelieu, whose spies were in every house and at every table. La Porte, the queen's valet de chambre, was arrested, and brought into the apartments of Chavigny, one of the secretaries of state, where the cardinal himself, concealed by the curtains of the bed, proceeded, we are told, to interrogate him in regard to the conduct of the queen. La Porte, however, recognised the voice of the minister, and took care so to shape his answers as not to betray the secrets of his mistress. The next step pursued by the cardinal was to order the chancellor to surprise the queen the first time she went to the Val de Grace, and seize her correspondence with the viceroy of Flanders. The chancellor, however, perceiving that the queen was likely to outlive by many years both the king and the minister, was afraid to execute punctually the directions he had received, and he took means to give Anne of Austria notice of the design against her. The queen immediately secured her correspondence ; and when on her next visit to the Val de Grace, the chancellor presented himself in her oratory, and demanded to examine the closet in which the letters were usually concealed, she permitted him to do so ; but he found nothing, with the exception of some books of the church. During many months Richelieu endeavoured, by the wildest and also by the most skilful devices, to get possession of some of the queen's papers, but in vain ; and he was obliged to rely upon bold assertions and insinuated suspicions to deprive her of all influence over the mind of the king. These means, however, were successful ; for Louis, who had never loved her, rejoiced in the prospect of an heir without any increase of regard for the mother.

Though cold, uncertain, and suspicious in all his attachments, he about this time very much sought the society of one of the queen's ladies, mademoiselle de Lafayette, showing more affection towards her, and placing more confidence in her, than he had ever done in regard to any other woman. Still the queen knew his nature too well to entertain any jealousy in regard to his love, if love it could be called, for her attendant. Not so, however, Richelieu, who saw in the strong-minded and somewhat enthusiastic mademoiselle de Lafayette a rival to be feared; and by gaining the servant who carried the various notes which passed between her and the king, he soon contrived to make her believe that the monarch's regard was declining. No, sooner was this conviction forced upon her mind than mademoiselle de Lafayette chose her part at once; and merely sending word to the king that she had gone to devote her services to a greater lord, she retired to a convent of Visitation. The next object of the king's favour was mademoiselle de Hauteford, towards whom he had shown some attachment before; but her character, which was mild and gentle, gave no offence to the minister until he perceived that she had connected herself with various other persons of a more turbulent and enterprising nature than herself; and not long after, he caused her to be driven from the court. He took care, however, to supply an object for the weak king to fix his regard upon, and for that purpose introduced to his notice Henry de Cinq Mars, son of the *maréchal d'Effiat*, to whom he gave such instructions for his conduct as soon won the confidence of the monarch, who successively made him master of the wardrobe and *grand écuyer*.

In the meanwhile the queen was brought to bed of a son*, afterwards the famous Louis XIV.; but the only beneficial effect which this event produced upon her own situation was to prevent the possibility of her being divorced upon the plea of sterility, a proceeding

* Sept. 5 1639.

which Richelieu had advised more than once; but which the king had hitherto refused to follow. She acquired no greater share of influence with her husband than she possessed before; and on the contrary, Richelieu derived the advantage of seeing the party of the duke of Orleans deprived of all hope of ever beholding that prince upon the throne of France. As such a hope had been the cement which attached almost every person of consequence in that faction to a man equally contemptible and dangerous, the minister saw many of his old enemies obliged to seek favour and forgiveness at his hands; and the duke of Orleans thenceforward lost the power of injuring the cardinal except as an individual.

While all the intrigues with which those times were so rife were taking place at the court of France, Richelieu by no means neglected the line of foreign policy which he had been heretofore pursuing with but little success. The death of the duke of Savoy, however, had given him an opportunity of extending the French interests in Italy, which he did not fail to seize; and with consummate skill but cruel injustice he proceeded to drive the duchess, regent of Savoy, into open hostilities both with Spain and with her husband's brothers, prince Thomas and the cardinal of Savoy. He then left her almost alone to defend her country against superior forces; and when, at length, she was on the brink of ruin, demanded, as the price of efficient support, that all the strong places which she still possessed should be given up into the grasping hands of France. The pretences with which he covered this robbery were too thin and transparent for the weakest eyes to be blinded by them; and the duchess strove and resisted during many months. At length, however, she was forced to comply to a certain extent, and yielded all her strong places, with the exception of Montmeillan, to the French troops. Even that refuge the cardinal endeavoured to wrench from her; and in a conference, which took place between herself and the king at Grenoble, every means short of actual force were employed to induce her not only to

give up Montmeillan, but to place her son the young duke under the paternal care of the king of France.

The duchess remained firm, however, strengthened in her resolutions by count d'Aglié her minister, who, in consequence, was afterwards arrested by order of Richelieu, in notorious violation of all the rights of nations. The famous count of Harcourt was soon after sent into Piedmont on the death of the cardinal de la Valette; and by a display of vigour and daring, which had not lately been found in the generals of France, he soon checked the progress of the Spanish arms. The perseverance of Richelieu in his designs against Austria now began to meet its reward, and the armies of France appeared daily more successful, though the fact of being at war with different powerful nations at every point of her frontier of course weakened her efforts, and divided her forces. On the borders of the Low Countries Hesdin was forced to surrender to the marquis de Meilleraye, after a long and vigorous siege*; and though Piccolomini, in the neighbourhood of Thionville, defeated Feuquières, and took Yvoix, the marechal de Chatillon forced him to retire shortly after, depriving him of all the advantages he had obtained. The duke of Weimar also having made himself master of Brissac, occupied, by his activity and skill, a considerable body of Austrian soldiers; while on the southern frontier the prince de Condé entered Roussillon, and captured the fortresses of Salces and Cannet. His success, however, in that quarter was not of long duration; the Spaniards advanced to defend their territory, and siege was once more laid to Salces.† The prince resolved to support the garrison he had left in that place, and marching towards the camp of the enemy, caused their lines to be reconnoitred by the maréchal de Schomberg, and by the duc de St. Simon, who had by this time abandoned the perilous trade of court favour for the less dangerous profession of arms. These two nobles advancing in a boat on the neighbouring lake, ascertained that the

* June 29. 1639.

† Sept. 20. 1639.

Spaniards were but inefficiently guarded at several points; and leading his forces through mountain passes, Condé appeared at a spot where he was least expected with an army of 26,000 men. Had he attacked instantly, there can be no doubt that he would have been victorious; but he chose to trust to the fears of his adversaries rather than to his own exertions, and determined to wait till the following morning. In the night, however, one of the storms occurred to which that country is peculiarly subject. The tents were blown down, the lower grounds were inundated, one half of the army disbanded itself; and on the following day the distressed state of his forces, as well as the water which covered the flats, prevented the prince from pursuing his intention. The Spaniards in the meantime pressed the place diligently, and, at length, on the last day of October, Condé again resolved to attack their lines, having now once more refreshed and recruited his army. Seldom successful, he was, on this occasion, more unfortunate than usual; he was repelled at all points with terrible loss, and was at length obliged to retire, leaving nearly 6000 men either killed, wounded, or prisoners. Salces immediately fell, and thus ended the campaign; but nevertheless the advantages which had been gained in the beginning of the year prepared the way for the greater and more successful operations which were to follow.

During 1638 and 1639 various political intrigues had been carried on, in which Richelieu's private interest was fully as much consulted as the good of the state he governed. The queen-mother continued to solicit permission to return to France, notwithstanding the cold and unfilial treatment of her own son; and the more she found that her friends were falling away, and her very name sinking into forgetfulness, the more eagerly she pressed for re-admission to the court of France, the more humble and moderate became her pretensions. Having proceeded to England, where the terrible struggle which ended in the death of the weak

and unfortunate Charles I. was just in its commencement, she addressed a remonstrance to the king of France and the cardinal duke, through the medium of the French ambassador at London, who communicated her message privately to the court of France, though he refused to do so in his official capacity. Richelieu, however, in the queen's case, had too deeply offended to forgive or be forgiven; and notwithstanding all Mary de Medicis' professions of amity and admiration, he determined to shut her out from France for ever. The king, whose scruples were only those instilled by his confessors, was easily prevailed upon to reject all her petitions; and Richelieu, whose enmity was never satiable, but rather gained fresh appetite from being fed, proceeded to crush down into the earth her he had cast from the height of power. He found excuses sufficient to retain the queen's dowry during her absence, and to deprive her of almost every comfort; and not satisfied still, he procured her dismissal from the court of England, where Charles was too dangerously situated with regard to his own people to dare the wrath of the implacable minister of France. Abandoned by her own children, and trampled on by the creature of her bounty, the unhappy Mary de Medicis, obstinate without firmness, violent without decision, and proud without dignity, found herself deprived of every honourable refuge. The States of Holland dared not give her an asylum; the regent of the Low Countries refused to receive her again; and betaking herself to the old city of Cologne, she lived there for a short time longer in indigence and neglect, and died an object of pity to all, but of affection to few.

With one who in former years might have proved a far more formidable adversary, Richelieu was also engaged about this time in very angry discussions. The pope had been long alienated from the interests of France, and had done many things to irritate the minister of that country; but a personal offence given to Richelieu was the immediate cause of that open rupture which took place at the period of which I now speak. Richelieu

had long been abbot of Cluny, and consequently at the head of the Benedictines of France ; but he now aspired to become chief of the monks of Cîteaux and Premontr  , and induced those orders to elect him their general abbot. The pope, however, refused to confirm the election, and no means could induce him to despatch the bulls required for that purpose. In vain the mar  chal d'Estr  es, then ambassador at Rome, stormed and threatened with his usual violence ; the pope resisted ; the cardinal's hat was refused to Mazarin, for whom Richelieu had long solicited it ; and one of the suite of the ambassador was assassinated in consequence of an affray with the Roman police. At length all Richelieu's violent and overbearing temper broke forth ; and taking for his chief complaint the death of a person attached to the embassy at Rome, he threatened to cause Scoti, the papal nuncio, to be publicly chastised in the streets of Paris. The nuncio, whose disposition was not mild, replied in terms little less violent ; and Richelieu sent Chavigny to forbid him the king's audience chamber, at the same time causing it to be reported that he intended to call a national council of the church of France, and cast off the domination of the pope in every thing except mere points of doctrine. The nuncio, however, sustained his part boldly ; the pope himself remained firm, knowing that the weak and superstitious mind of the king of France would be brought with difficulty to consent to such bold measures as Richelieu might dare to propose ; and all that the cardinal could obtain by his menaces was the elevation of Mazarin to the conclave.

Late in December *, 1638, the duke of Weimar had, as we have seen, made himself master of Brissac, after having gained several great advantages over the imperial forces ; but no sooner had he obtained that strong town, than Richelieu proposed, either by persuasion or stratagem, to wrest it from him for the benefit of France. The duke, fitted by nature for an adventurous leader,

* Dec. 19. 1638.

bold, skilful, active, generous, and clear-sighted, kept together, by his popular qualities and somewhat licentious indulgences, a large body of veteran troops, who were ill paid by France, but suffered liberally to plunder by their commander. Having now, however, reached his thirty-sixth year, he was beginning to grow weary of enacting the robber captain on a large scale ; and the possession of Brissac and a considerable territory round it opened to him the prospect of establishing for himself an independent principality. That he might not be forced to defend it alone, he looked round for some alliance which might give him strength to maintain his position between Austria and France. Under these circumstances he endeavoured to obtain the hand of the landgravine of Hesse ; but while the negotiations were still in progress, he received a summons from Richelieu to confer with him in Paris regarding the operations of the approaching campaign.

The duke was far too wise to trust himself in the hands of so unscrupulous a person as Richelieu, and sent d'Erlach, governor of Brissac, to communicate with the minister. The cardinal, in consequence, stopped the payment of his troops, but the duke still remained on the Rhine ; and Richelieu, obliged to treat at a distance, offered that general the means of conquering Franche Comté, and promised to secure him the possession thereof, if he would yield Brissac to France. Weimar, however, positively refused to do so ; but having advanced to Neuburg, with the intention of crossing the Rhine, he fell ill and died, after a short malady.

Both at the time, and subsequently, the enemies of Richelieu attempted to prove that the duke had died by poison ; but such a charge was so common in those days, and the proofs were in this instance so unsatisfactory, that we may well be allowed to doubt whether the accusation were not founded in mere malice. Before the duke's death, it is true, Richelieu had obtained a promise from d'Erlach to give up Brissac to France in case of his

commander's decease; and no sooner were the eyes of duke Bernard closed, than negotiations were entered into with the officers of his veteran army for the purpose of attaching them completely to the French service. Various difficulties arose ere the terms could be finally arranged; but at length the treaty was concluded; and the duke of Longueville, putting himself at the head of the late duke's forces, led them across the Rhine into the territories of the landgravine of Hesse, whom Richelieu had induced to declare, in favour of France against the house of Austria. Few important advantages, however, were gained in the field by the duke's army, which, having joined that of Bannier, was still kept in complete check by Piccolomini, till Longueville, falling ill, gave up the command to the count de Guebriant, and returned to France.

In the meanwhile Richelieu lost no occasion of raising up enemies to the house of Austria; and an opportunity having presented itself in Portugal, which was then under the domination of Spain, he employed every means which long habits of intrigue could furnish to make the Portuguese nobles shake off the foreign yoke. The negotiation was long, and it is probable that many of the particulars have escaped research; but it is clear that the minister of France was one of the instigators of that revolt which placed the family of Braganza on the throne of Portugal. The mistaken conduct of the Spanish government also prepared the way for his intrigues in another quarter; and early in the year 1640 the whole of Catalonia was ripe for insurrection.

Ere that event took place, however, the troops of France had made a demonstration of attacking Charlemont on the Meuse; but finding unexpected difficulties in the siege of that place, it was determined to direct the efforts of the army on the northern frontier against the important town of Arras. The great object to be attained was so to deceive the Spaniards till the siege was completely formed as to insure that neither fresh troops nor supplies should be thrown into the town; and the

maréchals Chatillon and Mielleray, by a feigned movement upon Bethune, succeeded in putting the adverse commanders so much off their guard, that the governor of Arras himself was absent when the trenches were opened before that city, and strove in vain afterwards to effect his entrance into the place.* After a two months' siege Arras was forced to surrender; but while it still held out, an event occurred which showed, in an extraordinary manner, how completely the will of Richelieu had now become law in France. The Spaniards had posted themselves in such a manner as to prevent the French army besieging Arras from drawing any supplies from the neighbouring country, and it became necessary to send a large quantity of provisions from Paris under the protection of a strong escort. The command of the whole was given to general du Hallier by the cardinal; but the king, fearing lest any defeat which du Hallier might meet with should leave the frontier of France again exposed, forbade him to set out. Orders to march immediately were sent by Richelieu; and the general, after some hesitation, acknowledged the prohibition which he had received from the king. The command to proceed without delay was then renewed, Richelieu taking upon himself the responsibility; and du Hallier, choosing to obey the minister rather than the king, put his troops in motion, and succeeded in bringing the provisions in safety to the besieging army. The hesitation, however, which he had shown, prevented his receiving any reward for his services; and it was long ere he obtained the marshal's staff, though his reputation in the army gave him every title to aspire to that distinction.

All now favoured the designs of Richelieu against the house of Austria. The campaign in Savoy, conducted by the count de Harcourt, was attended with the most brilliant successes that the arms of France had met with during many years. The Portuguese shook off the yoke of Spain; and the people of Catalonia

* June 13. 1640.

broke out into open revolt, murdered the viceroy, and demanded aid of France. Richelieu instantly seized the opportunity ; and sending troops into that province, he concluded a treaty with the Catalonians, by which they renounced allegiance to the crown of Spain, and gave themselves up to the French monarch. At first the French army in Catalonia, supported only by the raw and ill-disciplined militia of the province, met with several reverses, but the tide of fortune soon turned ; and in the course of the following year * the Spaniards were unable to keep the field against the French forces.

In the mean time the seeds of two of the most dangerous conspiracies which Richelieu had ever yet encountered were sown at the court and at Sedan. In regard to the first it may only be necessary to say here that Cinq Mars, grand écuyer, who had hitherto been merely the creature of the cardinal, and had received support from the minister in all his many quarrels with the king, had now established his favour with Louis more firmly than heretofore, and began to feel weary of the domination of Richelieu. To that minister he, in common with every other attendant of the weak monarch, had been accustomed to reveal all the actions and words of the king ; but Louis, who easily perceived that this was the case, bound Cinq Mars by a promise not to betray his confidence any more, and from that moment the favourite and the cardinal were at variance. Cinq Mars aspired to a seat in the council, and induced the king himself to propose it to the minister ; but Richelieu sternly set his face against it, and the king was forced to submit. For the cardinal and the favourite to remain in this situation long was impossible, as Cinq Mars well knew that his own ruin would sooner or later follow, if, by his power over the king's mind, he could not effect the ruin of Richelieu. To do so, however, required time ; and in the meanwhile a body of men, more powerful by rank, wealth, and experience, were goaded forward by the cardinal to seek his destruction also.

In the end of the year 1640, a gentleman, attached to the duke of Soubisc, who himself still remained in England, landed on the coast of France, and found means to deliver letters from his lord and the duke of Lavalette to various great nobles, amongst whom was the *maréchal de la Force*. That officer, however, after a short delay spent in considering how he ought to act, determined upon giving up the letters to Richelieu, as they appeared of a treasonable nature. Richelieu had already received some intimation of what had occurred, so that the marshal by his delay had placed himself in a dangerous situation. *La Richerie*, who had brought the letters, was arrested in Poitou, conducted to the Bastille, and there induced to tell all that he knew of the designs of Soubisc and others. It has been very generally supposed, indeed, that a considerable part of the declaration of the prisoner, if not the whole, was fabricated by the agents of the cardinal, as the walls of the Bastille betrayed none of the secret means that were employed to produce confessions from the victims within; and on more than one occasion it was suspected that both the testimony given, and the prisoners reported to have given it, were altogether fictitious. However that may be, *La Richerie*, the cardinal asserted, had declared that the purport of his mission was to induce the duke of Epernon and others to rise in the south, supported by the exiles in England and Italy; while the count de Soissons had engaged to enter France on the side of Champagne, and co-operate with them for the destruction of the minister.

No sooner did tidings of these events reach Sedan, than the count de Soissons sent to protest his innocence in the most vehement terms; and the cardinal, while he pretended to be satisfied with his assurances, left the cloud of suspicion still hanging upon him, and by manifold insults and injuries urged him on to the very designs of which he had accused him. The count had still retained, during his absence, the post of grand master of the king's household; but now

the monarch would not receive any of his nominations to the vacant offices usually filled up by that functionary. Shortly after the revenues of the count were seized by the crown ; and then a proclamation was issued forbidding the parts of France in the neighbourhood of Sedan to supply provisions for the use of that fortress. All these signs taught the count de Soissons and the duke of Bouillon what they were ultimately to expect, and of course drove them to the only course which was left open for them, except entire submission to the will of the minister. The archbishop of Rheims also having succeeded to the duchy of Guise, although he endeavoured to gain the hand of the princess Anne of Mantua, hesitated in regard to renouncing his benefices, being desirous of obtaining the nomination of some of his relations to the rich church preferment which he held. Richelieu would not consent to the desired arrangement ; and on the duke's retiring to join the disaffected princes at Sedan, seized his revenues for the benefit of the crown. A number of violent and enterprising men joined the count and his friends in their exile, and day by day the despotic acts of the minister added to the host of those who were ready to aid in effecting his overthrow.

At length the countess of Soissons, mother of the gallant but unfortunate prince of that name, visited Richelieu in person, in order to justify her son, and to draw from the minister what were his real intentions. All that she could obtain, however, was the renewal of a charge which the cardinal had brought against the princes more than once before, that they, or at least the duke of Bouillon, had treated with Spain. If the count de Soissons, Richelieu said, were really innocent of participation in the act of his friend, he ought to withdraw from Sedan ; but if he and the duke were equally guilty, they ought to avow their guilt, and have recourse to the king's clemency. To withdraw from Sedan and leave his friend to the fury of the cardinal, was an idea that the count would not entertain for

a moment ; and to place himself at the mercy of a king who knew no pity, and of a minister who never forgave, was equally out of the question. But one alternative remained. The long talked of treaty with Spain was at length concluded. That country promised to furnish troops, others were raised in the neighbouring districts ; and a multitude of malecontents of all classes flocked to Sedan, while the princes strengthened the fortifications of that strong place by every means in their power.

The preparations of the princes soon reached the ears of Richelieu, and gave him some alarm ; for the energetic character of the count de Soissons, and the military skill of the duke de Bouillon, carried on their proceedings with so much vigour and effect, that ere any army could take the field against them, Sedan was rendered capable of protracting its defence for an incalculable time in case of attack, or of affording, with one or two other points in the vicinity, the base for a series of operations against Champagne, which might ultimately conduct a Spanish army to Paris. Besides, the first important success obtained by the princes would raise the whole country against a man who was supported alone by terror, — and none knew better than Richelieu that such was his own situation. Under these circumstances the ambassador of the States of Holland endeavoured to bring about an accommodation ; but the princes rejected interference, and prepared to risk all upon the chance of war.

Early in April the first hostilities commenced ; and the maréchal de Chatillon hastened to put himself at the head of the army of Champagne, which was destined to oppose the progress of the insurgents. Entering the principality of Sedan, he contented himself with ravaging the country, but could not prevent the Spanish general Lamboi from effecting a junction with the enemy, who had hitherto remained within the walls of the fortress. As soon, however, as the forces of Spain appeared, those of the count marched out during the night, and he advanced at once to attack the French marshal. The two armies came in presence of each

other near a wood called the Marfée* ; but that of the princes did not obtain so favourable a position as could have been desired. Nevertheless, the battle having begun, while the French right wing was maintaining the field with advantage, the cavalry of the left wing was defeated by the princes' horse, and driven back in confusion upon the infantry. Seizing the favourable moment, the princes supported their cavalry ; the royal infantry was broken and fled ; the right wing, struck with panic, followed ; and a few regiments of cavalry, in the centre were all that remained fighting still against a successful enemy. The victory was already gained, and the battle, in fact, over, when the count de Soissons was killed by a pistol-shot in the forehead.* Some declare that he met his death from the hand of one of the troopers, who, fighting to the last, were all cut to pieces ; some, that in lifting the beaver of his casque with his pistol in his hand he accidentally destroyed himself. Some more wildly argued that he shot himself in remorse at the very success of his arms against his country ; but the testimony of those who were immediately about him during the battle led men very generally to believe that he met his death from the hand of an assassin. It was reported that a man at arms had been seen to gallop up as if to speak with him, that the discharge of a pistol had been heard, and that the prince immediately fell, while the horseman effected his escape. The death of the count ruined the party of which he had been the head ; but the number of prisoners, ammunition, and stores, taken by his forces, and the complete dispersion of Chatillon's army, gave the duke de Bouillon such advantages, that he soon after made a very favourable treaty with the cardinal, who even condescended to praise the skill and intrepidity which had been displayed by the leaders of the insurrection.

In the meanwhile Aire was besieged and taken by the maréchal de Meilleraye ; but was retaken almost as rapidly, in consequence of the negligent manner in which

* July 6. 1641.

it had been supplied after the first siege.* At the same time the prince de Condé, having established himself securely in the favour of the minister, by marrying his eldest son, who afterwards acquired the glorious name of the Great Condé, to a niece of Richelieu, was appointed, notwithstanding his frequent failures, to command an army destined to invade Roussillon, a small mountainous province contiguous to Catalonia. Its natural boundaries show it to be French; and the affection of the people for their Gallic neighbours, more than the skill of the prince, soon procured him several considerable advantages. To this point Richelieu now directed his principal attention, clearly perceiving that Roussillon, once gained, must ultimately remain in the hands of France; and he prepared to follow up vigorously his first successes in that province during the ensuing year.

Other advantages closed the year 1641; for while the war in Germany languished on both parts, the victories of the count de Harcourt in Italy had obliged the ambitious princes of Savoy to apply to Spain for more vigorous assistance. Attacked on many points at once, Spain was unable to afford efficient aid; and after long negotiations the two princes made their peace with France and with their sister-in-law the duchess, and joined with their new friends to carry on the war against their old allies.

The last year of the life of Richelieu now opened upon the world, and found him, though feeble in body, yet as energetic and powerful in mind as ever. A degree of coldness, however, had appeared towards him in the demeanour of the king, which Richelieu attributed justly to the insinuations of Cinq Mars, whom he had again offended by frustrating his views in regard to obtaining a peerage, and contracting a marriage with Mary of Mantua. The minister had determined, notwithstanding the state of his own health, to superintend the operations against Roussillon himself; but not daring,

* July 16. 1641.

under these circumstances, to leave the king exposed to all the suggestions of those who envied his power or hated his person, he resolved to carry the monarch with him. It was in vain that the physicians prohibited such a long and fatiguing journey to the feeble king. Richelieu was still sufficiently powerful to over-rule all objections ; and large bodies of troops were collected and marched off for the Narbonnois, in order to wait the coming of their commanders. The cardinal, however, did not forget in this instance to prepare against every event ; and his extraordinary exertions to provide with the most careful foresight for the defence of all points of the frontier, while he left no precaution unemployed to insure at the same time the success of his schemes upon Roussillon, offer in these his last hours a picture of the capacity and vigour of his intellect, which few other events of his life so well afford. The count of Guebriant, with the army of the duke of Weimar, was ordered to keep on the defensive in the vicinity of the Rhine. The forces of count d'Erlach in Alsace were re-enforced. Du Hallier was appointed to command in Lorraine, and the count de Grancey to defend the frontier of Burgundy ; while the count de Harcourt and the maréchal de Guiche remained upon the borders of Flanders. To guard against intrigues on the side of Champagne, too, the duke of Bouillon was despatched to command a body of troops in Italy, and the prince of Orange was induced to re-enforce the enfeebled army of the duke of Weimar with several regiments of cavalry from the forces of the States.

The troops marched into the Narbonnois, together with the levies made in the surrounding provinces, were quite sufficient for the conquest of Roussillon, if the Spanish court could be prevented from throwing fresh forces into the province ; and for that purpose Richelieu ordered the maréchal de Brezé and La Mothe Houdaincourt, who commanded in Catalonia, to watch the frontiers of Arragon, and to cut off the communication between Spain and this more remote possession. All

these measures having been taken, Richelieu gave to the court and the officers of the army one of those sumptuous entertainments in which from time to time he displayed both his love of ostentation and a taste of a higher and more refined kind; and then, accompanied by the king, set out for Roussillon, proposing ultimately to carry the war into the very heart of Spain.

Such preparations had not escaped the eyes of the Spaniards; and as Perpignan itself, the chief city of Roussillon, had been left hitherto very ill supplied, extraordinary efforts were now made to throw provisions and troops into that place, which, notwithstanding all the precautions of the *maréchal de Brezé*, was ultimately effected. The king and the cardinal arrived at Narbonne in the beginning of March, bestowing upon Mazarin, at Valence, the cardinal's hat, which had at length been obtained for him from Rome, by the reiterated solicitations of Richelieu. On the 17th of the same month the French army opened ground before the seaport of Collioure, by means of which the Spaniards had hoped to supply the strong places of Roussillon, during the war, with men and provisions. But the keen eye of Richelieu had fixed upon it at once; and notwithstanding an extraordinary effort made by don Pedro of Aragon to succour the town, in which attempt he was defeated and made prisoner, Collioure was soon forced to surrender. The citadel and the fort of St. Elmo still held out; but a mine, which the hardness of the rock rendered unsuccessful against the defences of the castle, nevertheless compelled the garrison to capitulate*, by destroying the only wells which supplied them with water.

The French army now immediately marched upon Perpignan, which, strongly garrisoned and fortified, threatened to make a long and vigorous resistance. The king put himself at the head of his troops in person; and all the efforts of the Spaniards to throw more troops into Roussillon were rendered vain by the precautions of

* April 10. 1642.

the minister and of the French generals. The success of the king's arms before Collioure was counterbalanced in some degree by the complete defeat of the *maréchal de Guiche* on the frontiers of Flanders, which laid open at once the north of France to the armies of Spain in the Low Countries. But Don Francisco de Mello did not improve his advantage ; and nothing could withdraw Richelieu from the endeavours he was making in Roussillon. The unfortunate and imprudent count de Guiche thought himself irretrievably ruined, and waited for the first letters from Richelieu as the signal of his disgrace. That minister, however, who never showed mercy to those who opposed him, never punished misfortune, or even incapacity, where there was a real purpose of promoting his designs. His first note to the count de Guiche, on hearing of his defeat and despair, would show him, were the rest of his character unknown, in the light of a mild, placable, and liberal man.

"Men may do," he says, "all that prudence and opportunity suggest, but the end is in the hand of God. There is no captain in the world who may not lose a battle ; but when that misfortune befalls him, he should console himself, if he have done all that he could and all that he ought to gain it. Console yourself, then, my poor count, and forget nothing in your power to prevent the accident which has happened from having bad consequences. If I had a strong arm, I would offer it to you ; but in whatever state I may be, I am entirely yours."

The allusion which he makes to his arm arose from an abscess having formed in it while engaged in the first preparations for the siege of Perpignan. Other maladies also fell upon him : his lungs became affected ; and leaving to the king the command of the army, he remained at Narbonne, daily becoming worse in health. The king also had fallen ill in the lines at Perpignan, and for some time was supposed to be at the point of death. During all these transactions, Cinq Mars, the grand écuyer, had been carrying on his designs, had engaged

the dukes of Bouillon and Orleans to give him ~~their~~ aid, had won fully one half of the army to his cause, and had habituated the ear of the king to hear bitter charges against the minister. Cinq Mars, however, was too fiery, proud, and impatient, to play the favourite long with success. By his negligence, his ~~lewd~~ lewdity, and his insolence, he gave the monarch frequent offence; and he could not restrain the sallies of his wild and hasty temper, even now that his own fate and the fate of France depended upon the skilful management of the means in his hands. A number of men of talent, and a number of men of intrigue, had joined the conspiracy against the minister; and while the king and the cardinal were both ill, the scheme was rapidly hurrying on towards its consummation. Various causes, however, tended to delay the execution: the duke of Orleans hung back and hesitated; Fontrailles, one of the conspirators, had long journeys to make in secret, in order to negotiate a treaty with the court of Spain; and the absence of the duke of Bouillon in Italy prevented any very rapid combinations from taking place.

In the mean time the monarch recovered; but the cardinal still remained ill at Narbonne: and the constant rumours which reached his ears, of his own loss of favour, of the ascendancy of his adversaries, and of schemes, wherein the king himself took part, for his dismissal, if not his death, tended to depress his mind and increase his malady. Unable to write with his own hand, unable to dispel by the power of his own presence the storms which his adversaries had gathered to pour upon his head, and warned by the king's utter neglect of him in his hour of sickness and distress, how little he could count upon the favour of that weak and heartless prince, the lion heart of Richelieu for once failed him, and, driven almost to despair, he proceeded to the medicinal springs of Tarascon, doubtful as to whether he had better trust to the fortune which had so often befriended him; or, abandoning a post from which he seemed likely to be hurled, fly to some foreign land to die in peace. He is said even to

have so far yielded to apprehension as to have embarked at the small port of Agde, near Béziers, upon pretence of going part of the way to Tarascon by water ; but, in truth, with a view of taking refuge in Italy. The fact, however, is doubtful ; but it is nevertheless certain that no act of despair would have been wonderful in the situation to which Richelieu was now reduced. So many persons had he offended past forgiveness, that his fall, had it taken place, must have been tremendous indeed ; but success had not yet abandoned his path ; and when he least expected it, a counterpart of the treaty which the conspirators had entered into with Spain was put into his hands, placing their whole designs under his eyes, and their very existence within his grasp. That the king had consented to his dismissal, perhaps even to his death, Richelieu could very well conceive, although some short time before Louis had informed him by a note that such was not the case ; but that the monarch of France would ever permit Spanish troops to be brought into his own dominions to act against his own subjects Richelieu did not believe, and he sent off Chavigny, one of the secretaries of state, directly to Perpignan, in order to lay the treasonable document before the king. Louis read it with indignation ; but still his regard for the grand écuyer was so great, that Chavigny found infinite difficulty in persuading him to suffer the favourite to be arrested.

At length, after a great deal of delay and agitation, the monarch consented ; but Cinq Mars had rendered himself so much beloved by the soldiers, that it appeared dangerous to attempt to seize him in the camp at Perpignan ; and Louis, under the pretence of illness, retired to Narbonne. There Cinq Mars received more than one direct intimation that his schemes were discovered, and that the cardinal had again gained the ascendancy : but he would not take warning till it was too late ; and when he at length determined upon attempting to escape, he found that the gates of Narbonne were shut. After an ineffectual endeavour to conceal him-

self, he was arrested*, and conveyed first to Montpellier and then to Lyons. He was carried thither, we are assured by some writers†, in a small boat, towed at the stern of the magnificent barge in which Richelieu, in a dying state, but surrounded by more than royal splendour, proceeded to Lyons, after having regained a degree of temporary strength. Other accounts, however, make it appear that the minister was borne by his own guards all the way from Tarascon to Paris in a magnificent litter, rendered so large that the gates of almost all the towns through which he passed were obliged to be thrown down to give it room. A person sat beside him, on a low seat in the litter itself, to amuse him with tales and anecdotes as he proceeded; and thus, with eastern pomp and luxury, he made his progress back to the capital from an expedition which had nearly ended in his utter ruin. As far as there are any means of judging between these two accounts, it would seem that part of the journey was performed on the water, the litter in which Richelieu reclined being placed in a barge and towed slowly up the Rhone, with the victims destined to satisfy his vengeance following. A considerable part we know to have been accomplished by land; but there can be no doubt that, in his state at the time, the cardinal must have been anxious to save himself from such fatigue as far as possible.

It was long, however, ere Richelieu was able to undertake the journey; and before that period he obliged the king to come to him at Tarascon, where, lying on two beds side by side, they held the first conference which had taken place between them for many weeks. Richelieu reproached the monarch for having listened to the insinuations of his enemies; and Louis, with tears, avowed his fault like a chidden school boy, promising obedience for the future. The king then returned to Paris; and after a considerable delay Richelieu fol-

* June 14 1642.

† Such is the account of madame de Motteville, who, though not an eyewitness to this barbarous spectacle, seems to have received her information from those who were.

lowed, as we have seen, in triumph. The garrison of Perpignan surrendered on the 7th of September, having exhausted every sort of provision which the place contained; and its fall was immediately succeeded by that of Salces*, which had also been left, by the negligence of Spain, without the means of resisting a long or a vigorous siege.

In the mean while the duke of Bouillon was arrested in Italy, and De Thou, Chavagnac, and several other persons, were also placed in custody. The duke of Orleans, as usual, no sooner heard that the conspiracy had been discovered than he at once abandoned his friends, without making an effort to save them, and sent messengers to the king and the cardinal beseeching forgiveness and pity. Richelieu, however, kept the fear of punishment hanging over his head, to induce him to give evidence against his accomplices; and, without remorse, that ungenerous prince made a declaration which brought their heads to the scaffold. He was induced, by his own pusillanimous apprehensions, to write down all he knew; and it would seem that at one time the cardinal was so convinced of his utter undignified baseness, that he proposed to confront him with his former friends as a witness against them. This, however, was more than he would perform; not that abhorrence of the act deterred him, but that he feared to meet the eyes of those whom he had betrayed and ruined, and slunk from the pointing finger of public scorn. He obtained from the cardinal, who rarely favoured such scruples, a promise that he should be indulged with merely a private interrogatory, which was accordingly pursued by the chancellor in presence of six commissioners; and the will of Richelieu pronounced that this testimony was to be held good in law.

As soon as this was concluded, the trial of the prisoners by a special commission proceeded; but the duke of Bouillon, in whose favour the most powerful interest was made, was saved by the wise and prudent conduct

* Sept 30.

of his wife, who held up before the eyes of the cardinal, as the price of her husband's life, the long desired principality of Sedan, which was possessed by the house of La Tour independent of the crown of France. Cinq Mars, De Thou, and Chavagnac, were alone brought to trial ; and it would have been difficult to convict either of the three, even by one of Richelieu's iniquitous tribunals, had they not been betrayed both by the duke of Orleans and themselves. The treaty, which in the hands of the cardinal afforded the basis of the accusation against them, and formed the principal feature of their crime, was, in fact, but a copy ; and though undoubtedly genuine, might have been altogether fictitious. Richelieu, we are told, could not even prove whence it came, and thus it might have been either manufactured by himself or by some other enemy of the accused. The duke of Orleans, however, established its genuineness ; and lest his testimony should not be sufficient, the prisoners were induced by the basest means to criminate each other. Cinq Mars was informed that De Thou had given evidence against him, and, there can be no doubt, was also offered his own life on the condition of making a full confession. He was thus brought to avow all, acknowledging that De Thou had known the treaty entered into with Spain ; but adding many particulars, which proved the innocence of his unfortunate friend in every other respect. This was sufficient : De Thou, confronted with Cinq Mars, and fearing the torture with which he was threatened, acknowledged that he had known the existence of such a treaty, but declared, as his friend had done before, that he had used every means in his power to dissuade the conspirators from every criminal proceeding. Of the guilt of Cinq Mars there could be no doubt, and his doom had been fixed by his own confession ; but in regard to De Thou much difficulty arose, even amongst the creatures of Richelieu, who had been appointed to judge him. The attorney-general, however, discovered a law of Louis XI. by which every one who did not divulge any treasonable matter which they heard were to be held guilty of treason.

themselves, and upon it De Thou was condemned, as well as Cinq Mars.

Of course, no regard was paid to the promises by which the grand écuyer had been beguiled; and, without any delay, the unhappy men were brought to the block in the great square of Lyons. Both died very generally regretted, for Cinq Mars, by personal graces and popular accomplishments, had won the hearts of the multitude during his continuance in favour; and De Thou possessed those higher qualities of the mind which command respect during life, and win reverential love to dwell with the memory of the dead in the hearts of all men. The only person tried with Cinq Mars and De Thou was Chavagnac, a protestant, who had fought gallantly under the duke de Rohan, and had since attached himself to the grand écuyer. Against him, however, nothing could be proved; and his innocence was so apparent, that even the creatures of Richelieu dared not condemn him. The duke of Bouillon offered to barter his principality of Sedan for mercy, and obtained it; and the duke of Orleans, condemned and despised by all, lived on almost forgotten till the troubles of another reign called him once more into malefic activity.

Tidings of the death of Cinq Mars and De Thou, and of the fall of Perpignan, reached Richelieu at the same time, and he communicated them to the king in these few words, "Sir, your arms are in Perpignan, and your enemies are dead." But the conquest of Roussillon was not the only success which was destined to adorn the last years of Richelieu's ministry. The maréchal de la Mothe Houdaincourt, with an inferior army, defended Catalonia against the whole forces of Spain. Prince Thomas of Savoy nearly drove the Spaniards out of Piedmont. Torstenson, the Swedish general, twice defeated the Austrians, and the count de Guébriant, having captured a number of towns on the Rhine, attacked general Lamboi in his lines, and after a severe struggle defeated and took him prisoner.

England was already plunged in a civil war ; Italy was torn with the struggles of its petty princes ; the armies and the finances of Spain were both in a state of utter ruin ; Austria was humbled and restrained ; Flanders could scarcely maintain itself against France and Holland ; and Richelieu might look around him on every side with pride and exultation, and say, — “ This is my deed.”

France, at the same time, was reduced to tranquillity, the Huguenots remained in peaceful subjection, no second rule was acknowledged within the empire ; the turbulent nobles, stripped of their power and diminished in their possessions, bowed humbly to the hand that had stricken them so often and so severely, and the voice of faction was unheard throughout the land. Richelieu and the king reigned alone ; but, ere the scene closed, there was one more act to be performed by the cardinal, and that was a triumph over the monarch himself. Affecting to believe that the king's guards had been gained by Cinq Mars, Richelieu refused to trust his person amongst them ; and on this pretence he induced Louis to perform three acts, which left him but a shadow of royalty in his own palace. First, he demanded that the king, for the transaction of business, should come to meet him instead of making him visit St. Germain's. To this Louis consented without difficulty. The next demand of the minister was the dismissal of several of the most attached officers of the royal guards. The monarch resisted, vented his indignation upon the inferior ministers, and then yielded to the dictation of the more powerful mind. But another still more extraordinary request followed, which was, that whenever the minister visited the king a number of his guards, equal to those of the monarch's, should be admitted to the palace, and to this also the king consented.

The end, however, was now approaching fast. It seemed as if just sufficient corporeal strength had been afforded to the great minister to see the accomplishment of all his favourite plans, and to plant the last steps

which a subject could take in the course of ambition. The illness from which he had suffered at Narbonne had diminished, but had not left him, and towards the end of November it returned with redoubled force. His strength failed; and after various means had been employed to give him relief violent fever succeeded, accompanied with great difficulty of breathing. It now became apparent to all that the minister was dying, and not less so to Richelieu himself. Having caused the physicians to tell him the truth, he proceeded to perform all the rites which the Roman catholic faith requires of the dying. He confessed, received the viaticum, and demanded extreme unction; but the priest having informed him that it was not necessary for a personage of such high clerical rank, he persisted in being treated, in all respects, as the lowest in the state. He bade adieu to his friends with the most perfect calmness and serenity, appeared to regret no act of his life, and declared boldly that all he had done was undertaken for the benefit of the state and the catholic faith. The most virtuous, the most mild, the most benevolent of men could not have shown a greater degree of satisfaction in the retrospect of his life, nor more confidence in his future salvation; and in this frame of mind he met the gradual approach of death with firmness, which never abandoned him for a moment. During his last hours the king visited him twice, and Richelieu bade him adieu for ever, in a tranquil voice, and with a strain of eloquence which evinced how unimpaired was still the mighty mind by all the sufferings of the weak body. He showed himself very solicitous for his relations, and anxious that the monarch should retain in office the ministers whom he himself had trained up in the ways of policy; and although his whole demeanour proved that he in no degree feared death, yet he appeared still to desire a longer life; for even after his physicians had pronounced him to be dying, he took eagerly the remedies of a quack, who pretended that he could effect his cure. Some relief he certainly did experience, and

his friends began to entertain delusive hopes of his recovery ; but shortly before mid-day of the 4th December, 1642, an abscess, which had been long advancing in the chest, broke, and in less than half an hour Richelieu expired with firm tranquillity.

The king, on being told of his death, only remarked, " There is a great politician gone !" and Anquetil has declared that this comprised all that could be said of Richelieu ; but he himself, however, has said more. The king, too, though he might not love his minister, owed him a higher tribute ; for weak, unstable, suspicious, blood-thirsty, cold-hearted, and narrow-minded as Louis himself was, he was indebted to Richelieu for every thing that was great or dignified or excellent in his reign ; and perhaps of all the many feeble monarchs which that age produced, he would have been alone distinguished by surpassing them in their weaknesses, and possessing none of their virtues, had it not been for the powers of his minister.

To the king Richelieu bequeathed the palace which he had built for himself, and which afterwards was called the Palais Royal, with a part of the magnificent furniture which it contained. He left the monarch also the sum of 1,500,000 livres, which he had been in the habit of keeping constantly by him against important occasions, and which he declared had more than once saved the state. He besought the king, however, to apply this sum to the same purposes for which it had been hitherto employed. Besides these two legacies he left immense wealth to his relations, and a number of considerable bequests to his friends and domestics. He yet is not charged with any peculation ; the finances of the state were at his death in a better condition than that in which he found them ; the armies of the king had never been suffered, by his negligence, to want supplies, except in the inexplicable business of the Grisons ; and the navy, the commerce, and the manufactures of the country had all greatly improved during his administration. The num.,

ber of offices he held, and the rich benefices which he accumulated in his person, were sufficient to supply the royal expense that he maintained, and to leave a considerable surplus ; while the multitude of estates forfeited by conspirators, and the immense revenues suppressed on the occasion of his enemies flying into exile, poured large sums into the coffers of the state.

In person Richelieu was above the middle height, extremely thin, and not particularly graceful. His features were fine and expressive, with an air of grave sternness which well became his character. In complexion he was sallow, and in constitution weak. His greatest foible seems to have been vanity, and his worst passion the love of vengeance. His ambition followed next, and, previous to his accession to power, it led him to many actions alike injurious to his country and to his patrons. After becoming minister, however, his personal ambition linked itself to the interests of the state ; and there can be little doubt that the selfishness which is so powerful in blinding all eyes taught him to believe that his preservation and his domination were absolutely necessary to the welfare of the country ; that his enemies were the enemies of France, and, therefore, that they were to be sacrificed without remorse. The sternness with which he, like the great Gustavus Adolphus, suppressed the barbarous practice of duelling was then often imputed to him as a crime ; but will now be readily admitted as a virtue.

His constant efforts to humble the nobles of France had most probably a better foundation than his personal enmities. He despised as well as hated them ; but he saw also that the kingdom would know no peace, that internal prosperity could never be obtained, nor external policy be rendered effectual, so long as a body of men so unprincipled as the French nobles then undoubtedly were, could at any time ravage the country, interrupt commerce, put a stop to industry, and occupy the forces of the kingdom at their pleasure. To correct such an evil state of things, we find that he

pursued, with undeviating steadiness, his purpose of lowering the power and changing the habits of the French nobility. Had he possessed the higher purposes of the Christian and the philosopher, he might have striven to purify and ennoble the minds, to elevate and dignify the character, of those whose vices were even more dangerous to the state than their power. It is probable, indeed, that the best directed efforts would have been ineffectual ; but the character of the policy of that age was physical rather than moral. In no country, except England, did high enthusiasms or glorious aspirations either inspire the people or support the government ; and Richelieu's endeavours were confined to crushing the power of the great nobles, and depriving them of all influence in the state, without one effort to render them just, wise, or patriotic. He took means to reduce the number of their followers, to diminish their fortunes, to seize upon their strong holds, to drive them from their castles to the court, and to make them the dependents upon the royal bounty, rather than the opponents of the royal will.

By so doing, however, he wrought a great change in society, against which he forgot to provide any counteraction. He destroyed the equipoise as it then existed, and failed to substitute any thing which might restore it at an after period. Had he been disposed to create a counterbalancing power in order to check the great influence he cast suddenly into the hands of the people by the debasement of the privileged classes, the elements were ready for his purpose in the three great councils, the parliament, the notables, and the states-general, and from these he might have raised an institution which would have guarded France against sudden convulsions. It was, perhaps, too much, however, to expect that he should foresee all the consequences to which his acts gave rise ; and as he did not degrade the French nobility so low by a thousand degrees as they afterwards degraded themselves, but only put them in the way to sink lower and lower, it would have been enough had

he not broken down also the only other barrier between the throne and the people. But his despotic character would bear no opposition ; he set the example of violating the laws by trampling upon all the privileges of the parliament, and showed France how frail was that barrier to which men were accustomed to look for protection against tyranny.

The history of his dealings with the people in general presents a contrariety in the two great objects which he pursued unremittingly through his ministry. He first, and above all things, sought to render the monarchs of France utterly despotic, and at the same time strove to civilise, to enlighten, and to enrich the nation ; forgetting that a prosperous and well-instructed people are the last tamely to endure a despotism ; that it is only while the great mass is plunged in one or other of the two sorts of barbarism, the barbarism of ignorance or the barbarism of corruption, that absolute power can be tolerated. The cause of this contrariety may be sought in the struggle of the clear-sighted politician with the ambitious tyrannical man ; and, in his efforts towards the attainment of each of the great ends that he proposed to himself, traces of the same struggle may be found. His best endeavours for enlightening the nation ; his patronage of sciences, literature, and arts ; his attempts to extend the commerce of France, and to generate a spirit of productive industry amongst the people, are all chequered with traits of an arbitrary disposition ; and at the same time in almost all of his most odious acts of tyranny we see the strong, vigorous, and, in one sense, philosophical mind of the statesman, tempering, guiding, and sometimes overpowering the vengeful passions of the tyrannical minister.

What would have been the result had his life been prolonged sufficiently to pursue to a conclusion his general scheme of policy, or whether he had any general scheme at all, cannot be told. That he fixed his mind, from a very early period, upon two or three great objects there can be no doubt ; but whether he had any

defined plan for attaining them is more problematical ; and it is not improbable that his general scheme, if he had any, was very vague ; for through his life men remarked that in the execution of his most important designs he was ever ready to stop and seize any collateral advantage. At all events, during his short ministry of eighteen years, he accomplished several very extraordinary things, both in general policy and administrative detail. He gave the final blow to the feudal system, and threw down the last remnant of an institution that in its infancy, its prime, and its decay had outlived a thousand years. He restored the balance of power in Europe, which had been lost, by the ascendancy of the house of Austria, since the reign of the emperor Charles V. He reduced to total subjection a body of men, who, as a political and religious party, had divided the means and paralysed the energies of France ever since the reformation. He extended on every side the boundaries of the country which he governed. He established and consolidated the first great trading company of France, — the company of the Indies. He founded*, endowed, and transmitted to posterity the greatest and most splendid literary institution of Europe, L'Academie Française, an institution which is at once glorious to its founder and reproachful to the rest of Europe. He re-established, increased, and improved the royal navies of France ; and he introduced into the army a degree of discipline, and into the commissariat a degree of accuracy which had never been known till his time, and which obtained for the French armies many of the successes that attended their efforts, not only in his own life but long after his death.

Richelieu possessed almost all those gifts which constitute a great minister. He was eloquent, clear, and precise in speech ; and in his despatches and letters there is to be found that union of great and comprehensive views, with the most intimate knowledge of detail, which is

* In 1635. This institution has undergone very little change of organisation since the days of Richelieu

so seldom to be met with. His directions were always definite and distinct ; and while he brought all the great objects to be gained into one general group, he omitted not one of the minor particulars which were necessary to the attainment of his purpose. In argumentation, too, he was very successful. Whenever he sought to combat any proposal before the council, he always began by producing, in eloquent language, all that could be said in its favour, and then taking up the contrary side, appeared to overthrow his former reasoning with regret, and only to state the cogent arguments on the opposite part from a sense of duty.

Strange to say, however, in the theological pursuits of his earlier years, and in the purely literary amusements with which he relieved the cares of government at a later period, he showed none of those powers which he displayed in his political writings and orations. In controversy he was weak and subtle, and as far as we can judge from the works attributed to him, he was in his literary compositions trifling and affected. The instance of the condemnation of the *Cid*, which he procured from the French academy, has often been brought forward to show the badness of his taste ; but it would seem that the author more than the work was the object of Richelieu's dislike.

He was keen, penetrating, and rapid in business, active, diligent, and indefatigable. His comprehension of every thing submitted to him was quick, and his decision immediate. When once taken, his resolutions knew no change ; for although he appeared occasionally to relax a part of those conditions which he demanded, there can be no doubt that he always required more than he expected to obtain, in order to leave room for concession. In temper, he was hasty, irritable, and revengeful, and in the relations of private life showed himself capricious and unequal, but not incapable of strong attachments. His diet was plain and scanty, but in every other respect he appeared luxurious and ostentatious. He left many who hated him, many who

feared him, some who respected him, some who admired him, but few who loved him ; and was, indeed, a great minister, though he can hardly be considered as a great man.

The writing of biography is often a sad task, as it shows us intimately to what height a man may rise amongst his fellows, what power he may attain, and what deeds he may perform, without accomplishing those grand purposes which can alone be formed in a noble heart, and executed by a mighty mind.

AXEL COUNT OXENSTIERN.

BORN 1583, DIED 1654.

FEW particulars of the private life of the famous chancellor Oxenstiern have come under my notice ; and the greater part of those which I have met with are either trifling in themselves, or of very doubtful authenticity. The principal traits of his behaviour, as related by Siri, are contradicted by others ; and all the collectors of anecdotes, who swept up the crumbs of history towards the end of the reign of Louis XIV., have left us very scanty notices of one of the greatest statesmen of his age. The cause probably is, that the life of Oxenstiern, unlike that of his great contemporary Richelieu, was altogether the life of a politician, the individual had therein very little part ; and while the personal views, interests, and passions of the French minister affected events throughout all Europe, it was the events themselves which affected the actions of Oxenstiern.

Axel Oxenstiern was born at Fano of Upland, in Sweden, in the year 1583.* His family was one of high consideration in the country. its head for thirteen generations having held a seat in the Swedish senate. His father, baron Gabriel Oxenstiern, one of the first hereditary barons created by Eric, died while he was yet in infancy, and left him and a younger brother to the care of their mother, under whose eye their first education was carried on. At an early period, however, the young Oxenstiern was sent from home to pursue his studies at various German schools ; and while at Wittenberg and Jena was directed to apply himself principally to theology, as his relations hoped to be able

* A print of Oxenstiern, engraved from the life by Miervelt, in 1636, represents him as at the age of fifty-three

to advance his fortunes in the protestant church of Sweden. This idea, however, was soon given up ; and it would seem that, before he returned to his own country, the course he was destined to pursue had been decided by his friends, though few perhaps expected that he would thereby rise to such a height as he afterwards attained.

The acquisition of foreign languages was at this time one of the chief objects of his studies ; and he obtained great facility both in writing and speaking Latin, German, and the modern tongues commonly used in the north of Europe. But he did not alone content himself with possessing the keys of knowledge without opening the gates, and acquiring the treasures within ; and if the picture drawn of him by the queen Christina, one who is likely to have known him well, be correct, his application at this period of his life must have been most extraordinary, to obtain all the varied stores with which his mind was enriched.

Before he reached his eighteenth year he proceeded to visit the various courts of Germany, and devoted his attention, with a zeal which was well repaid in after years, to acquire a thorough knowledge of the views and interest of each ere he returned to his native land. In the year 1602, however, Oxenstiern, in common with all the absent nobility of Sweden, was recalled to his own country, in order, we are told, to swear allegiance to Charles IX.* ; and having been introduced to the particular notice of that monarch, he was sent in 1606 on a diplomatic mission to the court of Mecklenburg. The business he had there to transact would appear to have been of no great importance ; but his manner of conducting it gave satisfaction to the king, and from that time he was constantly employed in the service of the state. He returned to Sweden, however, before the year 1609, at which period he was named one of the

* Such is the general account of the biographers of Oxenstiern ; but it is asserted by others that although Charles governed Sweden with undivided authority from the year 1599, yet he was not absolutely elected king of Sweden by the states till 1604.

members of the senate, and about the same time he married; but events, both foreign and domestic, had been long advancing towards maturity, which soon called him from his domestic circle and his native country, and which require some brief investigation in this place.

Gustavus Vasa had, upon the wisest political grounds, fixed the protestant faith as the national religion of Sweden, and had, by a fundamental law, excluded all Roman catholics from participation in the government. The throne had been made hereditary in his family by the consent of a willing and grateful people; but by a voluntary act of the king, with the approbation of the nation, Gustavus rendered it a condition that no future monarch should attempt to alter the established religion. His second son, however, John duke of Finland, who afterwards dethroned the elder, Eric, and succeeded to the crown, soon became a convert to the catholic faith, and, on his accession, gave manifest indications of a wish to introduce the religion he had adopted into the kingdom he was called to govern. This first awakened the jealousy of the Swedes; but when his son Sigismund, who had become in his father's lifetime king of Poland, succeeded, and at once evinced a determination of restoring catholicism and oppressing the protestants, the states of Sweden prepared for resistance. Charles, duke of Sudermania, the fourth son of Gustavus Vasa, put himself at the head of the malecontents, and, taking advantage of Sigismund's absence in Poland, seized upon the crown of Sweden. Supported by an united people, he was not to be shaken by all the efforts of Sigismund, and retained the sceptre under the title of Charles IX. Sigismund continued to look upon his uncle Charles as an usurper, and long, but not very sanguinary, contentions succeeded.

On the other hand, the kings of Denmark, who had held the crown of Sweden till expelled by Gustavus Vasa, never abandoned entirely their claims to that country; and Christian IV., the reigning sovereign, a brave and skilful, though somewhat headstrong prince, carried on

the war with Sweden on various pretences with very considerable success. While Charles, the old king of Sweden, maintained the military reputation which he had acquired in his earlier years, Oxenstiern was despatched on a new mission to Livonia, where he displayed so much skill in consolidating the Swedish party in that province, notwithstanding all the intrigues of Poland, and in healing the differences which had arisen between the city of Revel and the neighbouring nobility, that his character as a statesman was established, and the eyes both of the king and the nation were called to his talents, as those which were destined to influence, if not to guide, the fortunes of the state.

Surrounded by enemies on every side, Charles saw the necessity of increasing the armies, and drawing forth all the resources of Sweden ; and with these views he called together the states, and demanded prompt and vigorous assistance.* Popular assemblies, especially when they are not habituated to the orderly discharge of business by regular periods of assembling, are always slow and generally penurious ; and Charles met with so much opposition at a time of extreme urgency, that, giving way to the violence of temper which characterised his family, he fell into a fit of passion which produced a sudden stroke of palsy. Several of his faculties became enfeebled ; but, wise enough to perceive that this was the case, he called around him the men on whose abilities and honesty he could most fully rely, and entrusted to their hands a great part of those important affairs which he had hitherto conducted himself. The principal amongst these counsellors was Oxenstiern ; and when at length in 1611 the king felt death approaching, he named a council of regency, the selection of the members composing which was somewhat curious, at least in one respect. His queen Christina, of course, held a place therein ; and Oxenstiern, though only twenty-eight years of age, was particularly named ; but besides these and several members of the senate, the king appointed his nephew John,

* 1609.

half-brother of Sigismond, king of Poland, to be one of the guardians of his son and one of the regents of the kingdom, during the short minority that ensued. That magnanimous prince held the ancient province of eastern Gothland, with the title of duke, was much beloved by the Swedes, adhered to the protestant faith, was brave and skilful as a military commander, and displayed, on many occasions, an active enterprising disposition. He was, moreover, descended from the elder branch of the house whereof Charles IX. was the younger brother, had, on a formêr settlement of the succession, been named contingent successor to the throne in the event of Sigismond dying childless, and was in every respect nearer to the throne of Gustavus Vasa than Gustavus Adolphus, who now succeeded. Yet such had been the confidence of his uncle, Charles IX., in his honour and moderation, that with wise policy he had named him to a post which placed great power in his hands ; and such was the generous magnanimity of John, that as soon as the short minority of Gustavus Adolphus was expired*, he made a voluntary renunciation of all his rights to the throne of Sweden, and through life obeyed and served his cousin with the zeal and affection of a friend and brother.

No sooner had Gustavus reached the period of his majority, which in Sweden had been fixed at the beginning of the eighteenth year, than the queen and Oxenstiern called a meeting of the states, and the order of succession, as it had been settled at Linköping on his father's accession, was fully confirmed, leaving Gustavus Adolphus in his eighteenth year absolute monarch of Sweden. During the assembly of the states, Oxenstiern acted throughout as the director of the young king's councils ; and about this time also was raised to the office of chancellor of the kingdom of Sweden.

The task of prime minister, which was, in fact, that which Oxenstiern had now to fulfil, was not without

* Some writers assert that he refused to accept the guardianship of the young prince, and at once renounced all claim to the throne.

manifold difficulties in Sweden at this epoch. Russia, allied with Poland, and having chosen the son of Sigismund as czar, threatened to overwhelm the dominions of Gustavus on the one hand, while Denmark, under Christian, continued the war fiercely on the frontiers and in the Baltic. Gustavus almost immediately on his accession put himself at the head of his forces, and prepared to carry on hostilities vigorously against the persevering enemies of Sweden ; but his campaigns on the Danish border, though success often attended particular enterprises, were not upon the whole advantageous to Sweden.

In the course of the year 1612, however, the English ambassadors at the courts of the two kingdoms endeavoured, by order of their sovereign, to bring about a peace between Gustavus Adolphus and the Danish king ; and Oxenstiern was appointed to conduct the negotiations on the part of the young monarch. Extraordinary delays protracted the discussions for months ; and it is laughable to find that the principal causes of a dispute in consequence of which so much blood had been shed, and so much misery entailed upon both countries, were points of heraldry and precedence, insignificant, unworthy, and absurd. Such considerations, however, were at that time held as very weighty by the northern nations ; and during the course of the negotiations themselves, we find curious instances of tenacity in regard to etiquette, which delayed for some time the conclusion of the treaty. Anstruther, ambassador from England at the court of Denmark, proceeded to the place of conference, for the purpose of mediating between the belligerents conjointly with sir John Merick, and Spence, the English envoy in Sweden. No sooner did he arrive, however, than he sent his secretary to Spence to beg that diplomatist to call upon him, as the king of Denmark had prohibited him from rendering the first visit to an ambassador at the court of Sweden. Spence referred the demand to Oxenstiern ; who re-

plied angrily, that Denmark had no real, nor even apparent, superiority over Sweden, and he would not suffer Spence to comply. It was at length arranged, however, that the two ambassadors should meet in a tent, half way between the Danish and the Swedish quarters, and the negotiation then proceeded.

Oxenstiern displayed infinite skill in the whole of the ensuing transactions, suffering Denmark to gain by slow degrees some of the ceremonial advantages for which she strove, while he obtained for Sweden the restitution of all the places which had been taken from her, except one, which was also to be restored on the payment of a sum of money. Several particulars of small importance^d delayed the conclusion of the treaty for some time after the principal terms were agreed upon ; but it was signed in the beginning of the following year*, and left Sweden free to oppose the efforts of Russia and Poland. Not contented, however, with having thus freed his country from an enemy, whose proximity rendered constant attention necessary, Oxenstiern applied himself to strengthen the power of his sovereign by foreign alliances ; and sent ambassadors to Holland in order to negotiate a defensive and commercial treaty with the States General ; while, at the same time, the warlike monarch under whom he acted obtained permission to raise two bodies of auxiliaries in Scotland and the Low Countries.

A number of excellent fiscal regulations and internal arrangements were made about this time in Sweden, for the purpose of promoting commerce and manufactures, curtailing the expenses of law suits, and withdrawing the youth of the country from foreign universities to that of Upsal, an institution which both the king and the minister did all in their power to improve and support. It is difficult, however, to distinguish, with any certainty, which of the wise laws that we now find promulgated emanated from Gustavus Adolphus himself, which from Oxenstiern. In almost

* Jan. 19. 1613.

every other country at that epoch appeared a sovereign and a favourite of very different powers; and the acts of the one are generally easily separated from those of the other. In England, indeed, the monarch and the favourite were equally weak; but in France and Spain the effects of Richelieu's sagacity and Olivarez's activity were at once to be distinguished from the proceedings of their imbecile and indolent masters. Oxenstiern and Gustavus Adolphus, however, approached each other so nearly in character, their objects were so much the same, and their union of purpose and effort was so complete, that, except in military proceedings, it is seldom possible to ascertain what act sprang from the mind of Gustavus alone, what originated in the suggestions of Oxenstiern.

In 1614 the chancellor, after having executed an embassy to the court of Denmark, in order to explain the motives of the approaching contest between Gustavus and the czar, accompanied the monarch in his expedition against Russia, and there, together with his master, studied more scientifically the art of war, under the famous De la Gardie. The advantages obtained by the Swedish arms were not particularly brilliant; but before the conclusion of the following year, Russia was well inclined to listen to the terms of pacification proposed by the ambassadors of Holland and England; and, after long discussions, a treaty was ultimately agreed upon at Stolborn*, by which the czar finally ceded to Sweden the whole of the sea-coast of Carelia and Ingria. In 1617 Oxenstiern assisted at the coronation of the king, which took place at Upsal, and then aided him in bringing to perfection all those admirable internal arrangements which secured tranquillity and prosperity at home, while the monarch pursued against Poland those military operations which the proceedings of his cousin Sigismund now rendered absolutely necessary to the stability of his throne.

During the two succeeding years the war with Poland

* Feb. 17, 1617.

was carried on languidly, interrupted by frequent truces, and renewed by reiterated provocations ; but still without any great success attending the proceedings of the Swedish monarch, who was, as yet, but trying that strength which he afterwards used as a giant when a great opportunity presented itself.

About this time, however, an accident which befell Gustavus had nearly terminated, not only his own career, but that of Oxenstiern. By some unexplained negligence a castle, situated at a short distance from the capital, in which the king and the chancellor had met for the transaction of business, took fire during the night, and ere either the monarch or his minister were aware of their danger the staircases had become impassable. Both were forced, as a last resource, to leap from the windows, and then to swim the moat, in which, owing to the quantity of tenacious mud that it contained, they had nearly been drowned. The king escaped perfectly unhurt, but the chancellor received several injuries, which seemed severe at the time, but did not ultimately affect his health. In 1619 a meeting was proposed, and carried into effect, between Gustavus and Christian, king of Denmark, at a frontier town, where, in the midst of festivities and tokens of friendship, a number of important measures were agreed upon for the security of both countries ; and in the course of the following year the Swedish monarch, we are told, visited in disguise the capitals of several German princes, and ended his journey at the court of Berlin. Some have supposed the monarch to have been actuated in this proceeding, which was certainly dangerous, by political reasons, and some have believed that his sole motive was the desire of seeing with his own eyes the princess Maria Eleanora of Brandenburg, who afterwards became his queen. Certain it is, however, that towards the end of the year 1620 Oxenstiern was sent to conduct the princess to the court of her future husband, with whom her marriage took place immediately on her arrival at Stockholm.

To the siege of Riga, which followed, Oxenstiern accompanied the king, and served under him in a military capacity. He remained, however, always near the person of his master during the sieges of Riga, Dunamond, and Mittau. A multitude of confused events succeeded, which would be too long and tedious to relate in this place; and it is only necessary to say, that during the succeeding war with Poland Oxenstiern acted alternately as warrior and statesman, and that, after attending the king to Livonia, he conducted several negotiations concerning peace, all of which proved ineffectual. At length the constant successes of Gustavus Adolphus compelled the weak and short-sighted Sigismond to consent to a truce of six years, beginning in August, 1629; and in the negotiations which preceded the treaty, Oxenstiern showed all that skill and judgment which he had previously displayed, obtaining for his master the virtual cession of those parts of Livonia which Gustavus had conquered, as well as the towns and territories of Memel, Braunsberg, and Elbingen, and the strong fortress of Pillau.

Two anecdotes are related of Oxenstiern's conduct during the war and the negotiations with Poland, which, though perhaps doubtful, may have a place here, as they do not in any degree affect the truth of history. On all occasions Gustavus Adolphus exposed his person as much as any common soldier in his army: three times, during the war with Poland, he had nearly been taken prisoner, and was twice wounded. The remonstrances of his friends were vain; and Oxenstiern, more boldly than the rest, urged the necessity of caution. "My good chancellor," answered the monarch, "you are too cold in your nature for me." Oxenstiern immediately replied, "That may be, sire; but if my ice did not sometimes serve to abate your fire, your majesty might have been scorched long ago." The second anecdote relates to the ceremonial stiffness of the Polish and Swedish etiquette, and is sometimes told of Oxenstiern, sometimes of his son. On meeting to confer for a truce, the ambassadors

of the two countries, for many minutes, maintained a perfect silence, each pretending that it was the business of the other to speak first. At length the chancellor of Poland began by saying, in a tone of reproach, "Illustrious gentlemen of Sweden, in order that politeness may be upon our side, we wish you a good morning." To which Oxenstiern replied, — "That we may not appear ungrateful, we wish you right minds."* If there be any truth in the anecdote at all, it is probably applicable to the statesman of whom I now speak, as I cannot discover that his son was ever engaged in such negotiation with the Poles as to justify the contrary supposition; and certainly never was so with the Polish ministers said to have been present at this interview.

Some time before the signature of the treaty with Poland, Oxenstiern undertook, and conducted with success, one of the most difficult negotiations in which he was ever engaged; but as this will lead us to the opening of a new scene in the eventful wars of those times, we must turn for a moment to the state of Germany, in which the house of Austria was rising to a height of power that made all the inferior princes of the empire tremble for their liberties and privileges. The first seeds of that famous series of hostilities, called, in general, the 'Thirty Years' War, were sown by a dispute in regard to the succession of Juliers; but they were rendered prolific by the election of Ferdinand II. to the throne of the empire, and by the civil dissensions which took place between him and his oppressed subjects in Bohemia. On his accession to the imperial dignity†, Ferdinand found himself without money, without forces, and without friends; his remote territories in revolt, his nearer dominions coldly disaffected, the electors of the empire divided amongst themselves, and a strong party throughout Germany

* The jest loses its point in any other language than that in which it was made. The dialogue was carried on, as usual with the Poles and Swedes, in Latin, and the words of Oxenstiern were *Precamur vobis bonam mentem* "

† March 20. 1619.

opposed to the religious and political opinions which he was disposed to support with tyrannical zeal. Yet, in eleven years, by skilful but deceitful policy, by the improvement of accidental circumstances, by the division of the electors, and the successes of his generals, he had defeated his enemies, over-run their territories, and annihilated their power; he had quelled insurrection in all parts of his hereditary dominions; had completely overawed and intimidated the south of Germany; had reduced to despair the union of protestant princes who had leagued in defence of their religion and their rights; had defeated and forced to fly Christian, king of Denmark, who had been called to their aid; and, sending Wallenstein into Pomerania, he was now attempting to possess himself of the command of the Baltic, in order to subject the north of that great track which lies between the Rhine and the Nerva to the same bondage whereunto he had already reduced the south. The only opponent that he feared was the young king of Sweden; and, while he had been prosecuting his ambitious views in the south, he had taken care to foment every dispute between Gustavus and his neighbours, sending reinforcements to the king of Denmark during the hostilities which at one time took place between Christian and the king of Sweden, and giving throughout the war such covert aid to Sigismund, king of Poland, as to enable him to struggle with Gustavus; hoping to exhaust both competitors, in order to take advantage of their weakness at an after period.

The successes of Wallenstein in Pomerania were only equalled by the license he permitted to his soldiery. But the town of Stralsund in the end opposed an obstacle to his course; and after endeavouring, by various treacherous means, to obtain possession of that fortress, he at length besieged it in form. The king of Denmark, however, had time to aid the government of Stralsund by a reinforcement from his own army; and the fleets of Denmark and Sweden contrived to keep the port open, and from time to time to throw in

supplies and ammunition. Thus the siege was protracted for an extraordinary length of time: but Wallenstein, furious at being frustrated in his attempts, pressed it forward more vigorously than ever; and it became apparent to Gustavus that, unless the city could be succoured speedily, its fall would be inevitable, Austria would obtain one of the best ports in the Baltic, and the command of that sea would be wrested from Sweden and Denmark. The king of the latter country, defeated, exhausted, and pursued even to his own territories, could afford Stralsund no efficient aid; but still, as he was already jealous of the superiority of Sweden, it seemed likely that he would rather make his peace with Austria, and see a counterbalancing power rise up against Sweden in the Baltic, than yield so great an advantage to Gustavus as the possession of Stralsund would bestow. The duke of Pomerania, too, though ruined and pillaged by the Austrians, was likely to oppose the views of the Swedish king; and Stralsund itself might prefer obtaining such advantageous terms from Austria, as its gallant defence was sure to command, than yield itself to the power of a nation of which the Hanseatic towns had long been jealous.

To overcome all these difficulties, Gustavus despatched Oxenstiern first to Stralsund, and then to the court of Denmark. In all his negotiations the chancellor was completely successful; and a treaty, offensive and defensive, was entered into with Denmark.* The duke of Pomerania dared not take an active part against the house of Austria, but was found in no condition to oppose the king of Sweden; and the government of Stralsund itself gladly caught at the offers of Gustavus, and besought him to send the promised succour as promptly as possible. That succour was not only prompt, but such as to render it effectual; and immediately upon receiving notice that his troops would be received, Gustavus despatched Leslie, a veteran Scotch officer in the service of Sweden, with 6000 men, and an immense convoy of

* May 29. 1628.

provisions and ammunition. Wallenstein continued the siege for some time longer, but at length decamped ; leaving Leslie not only in possession of Stralsund but of the isle of Rügen, which the commander of the Swedes had conquered since his entrance into that city.

The foreign power which had most contributed to bring about the peace between Poland and Sweden was France, which, under the government of the famous cardinal de Richelieu, was now preparing all her energies to reduce the excessive influence of the house of Austria, and to aggrandise the French monarchy at the expense of that of Spain. In pursuit of the latter of these objects, Richelieu saw that the troops of Louis XIII. would find sufficient employment; and in order to accomplish the abasement of the German branch of the Austrian family, he sought to raise up enemies to the emperor, and to supply them with the means of checking him in his hitherto uninterrupted course of success. With this view he had laboured to put an end to the war, which wasted the resources and employed the troops and energies of Gustavus ; and he now suggested to the Swedish monarch the glory and advantage which would accrue to him from contending with the head of the German empire. The princes of the protestant union, for the third or fourth time, eagerly applied to Gustavus to give them aid and protection, as soon as they saw him free to grant their request. The Hanse towns joined in the petition, and offered the resources of their wealth. The states of Holland, engaged in a war with Spain, supported warmly the petition of the protestant league, and many of the catholic princes themselves intimated that they would either remain neuter, or aid the king of Sweden to repress the overgrown authority of a tyrannical prince.

Gustavus, however, paused, although the emperor had acted towards him both, with open hostility and with base and ungenerous duplicity ; and before he returned to Sweden he held more than one conference with Oxenstiern upon the step to which he was urged by so many

motives. The chancellor agreed to the necessity of checking the progress of the house of Austria in the north, by declaring war against the emperor, but, unaware of all the latent resources of his master's mind, he advised him strongly to confine himself to merely defensive operations. He represented to the king the large army which Austria had already in the field, her vast dominions, her veteran troops, her proved and skillful generals. But Gustavus possessed that power of seeing — of foreseeing, indeed, — all the mighty combinations which were certain of taking place in his favour. His soldiers were few, it is true, but they were veterans also : they were disciplined in a manner both peculiar to themselves, and superior to the discipline of the imperial armies, and they were commanded by generals whose skill, courage, and fidelity had been thoroughly tried. The support and confidence of the people of Sweden, too, was sure, and the resources of the country were great, and were easily rendered available ; while the forces of the German protestants, and the various bands of independent adventurers which had hitherto been generally arrayed against the emperor, offered the means, under the direction of a powerful and commanding mind, of counterbalancing the superior strength of Austria, in the contest with Sweden. Nor could Gustavus feel within himself the mighty energy of his own character, struggling for opportunity to exert its powers upon a worthy object, without calculating upon an ally in his own genius which was enough to baffle all the hosts of Ferdinand.

The reasonings of the monarch were conclusive with his minister, who was one of those rare men who may be convinced ; and leaving Oxenstiern behind* with 10,000 men, to preserve the territory he had conquered, the Swedish monarch returned to his own dominions, and laid before the senate his views in regard to the war, at the same time demanding their advice as

* Some accounts state that Oxenstiern was not left behind, but returned to Stockholm with the king.

to whether it should be rendered merely defensive, or carried into the heart of Germany. The opinion of the senators strongly confirmed that of the king ; and in a subsequent meeting of the states, the unanimous and enthusiastic voices of his people bade him go forth and conquer, promising all that strong and willing support which an united nation can give to a monarch beloved, admired, and revered.

An offensive war was now fully determined upon ; and the government of Sweden applied itself to use all means for rendering that war successful, both by the preparation of magazines, armies, and funds, and by the conclusion of alliances with every one who feared or hated the house of Austria. Ferdinand, in the mean time, used every effort to embroil Gustavus with Denmark ; and Christian, king of the latter country, who was not well pleased to see his young and energetic rival engage in an enterprise which had baffled him and all the Danish forces, though he concluded a treaty of amity and mutual defence with Sweden, offered to mediate between Gustavus and the emperor. The imperial envoy, and the Danish mediators proceeded to Dantzic ; and Oxenstiern, who was still in Prussia, received orders to confer with them. The clear-sighted minister, however, soon perceived that the Danes leaned to the Austrian side of the question ; that the imperial envoy had no intention of concluding peace upon terms honourable to Gustavus, or advantageous to the protestants ; and that his chief object in visiting Dantzic was to examine the preparations of Sweden, and detach the Dantzigers from their alliance with the king. It seemed more than probable, also, that the eagerness which the emperor displayed in accepting the mediation of the Danish king was caused by the hope of entangling the Danes and Swedes in disputes which would end in open opposition ; and the minister of Gustavus saw at once that it would be difficult to negotiate, and yet dangerous to decline, lest the Danes should therein find a pretext for joining the house of Austria. Oxenstiern

therefore endeavoured, in the first instance, to withdraw the imperial envoy from the scene of his machinations, by refusing to treat in Dantzic ; and finding that his opponent would not conduct the negotiations in any other place, as well as knowing that they would be fruitless, he seized a pretext by which the Danes could not be offended, and declared that he would not proceed to Dantzic, alleging that the emperor not having chosen to give his sovereign the title of king in his letters, nor having furnished his envoy with full powers, it was evident he had no intention of treating sincerely. He sent, however, the terms to which his master was willing to consent, and which were no more than he had a right to demand : but they were at once rejected ; and although the emperor endeavoured to protract the negotiations so as to gain time for the completion of all his schemes, and the consolidation of his power, ere Gustavus disputed the field with him, that monarch was not to be delayed nor deceived ; and hastening his preparations, he was ready to open the campaign early in the year 1630.

In the mean time the imperialists had endeavoured, as far as possible, to secure for themselves the strong places of Pomerania, in which district they easily perceived that Gustavus must make his first descent, and they even attempted to persuade the sovereign of that country to receive an Austrian garrison in his capital of Stettin ; but the duke steadily refused, endeavouring, however, to induce Gustavus to lead his forces in some other direction, or to grant him the privilege of neutrality. The Swedish monarch positively declined to make any such concession, replying, " He who is not for us is against us ;" and on the twenty-fourth of June, 1630, he embarked his troops, and, after a tempestuous and troublesome navigation, landed on the isle of Rugen*, which had been taken from the imperialists by general Leslie some short time before. The whole force which he now possessed

* Some historians declare that Gustavus went to Usedom, before either landing at Rugen or visiting Stralsund.

on the continent seems to have been numerically under 30,000 men ; and with these he prepared to wage an offensive warfare against a monarch commanding nearly eight times that number of veteran soldiers. But, as it is not the biography of Gustavus that forms the subject of this memoir, a slight sketch of his successful career may be sufficient, until Oxenstiern again appears upon the scene.

The whole of Pomerania, with the exception of two fortresses, was speedily over-run, and the duke forced to enter into a treaty with Sweden. Gustavus then turned his attention towards Mecklenburg and Brandenburg ; but, meeting with unexpected difficulties, was obliged to return to secure his conquests in Pomerania, and capture the towns of Goldberg and Demmin. In the meanwhile, however, Tilly advanced against him at the head of the imperial army, and cut to pieces without mercy a Swedish detachment in Brandenburg. But Gustavus could not be tempted to give the Austrian general battle under disadvantageous circumstances ; and while the two armies lay in the neighbourhood of each other, success in almost all the skirmishes was on the side of the Swedes. To compensate the loss of Pomerania, by some advantage gained, Tilly besieged Magdeburg ; and taking it by surprise, after a long resistance, encouraged his soldiery in the most barbarous massacre that is perhaps recorded in history. Frankfort on the Oder, however, was taken by Gustavus by storm, and the garrison were there refused all quarter.

The landgrave of Hesse Cassel now openly joined the king of Sweden ; and the elector of Saxony, after having in vain attempted to create a separate interest for himself, and to gain such power as would enable him to hold the scales between Sweden and the empire, was driven, by the triumphant insolence of Tilly, to submit to the former, and to beseech Gustavus for protection against the general oppressor of Germany. About the same time France concluded a treaty of alliance with Sweden ;

and from this moment success seemed assured to the opponents of the empire. Tilly, after having rendered himself master of a considerable part of Saxony, and exercised the most brutal cruelty upon the people of that country, approached Leipsic; and having compelled that city to surrender, awaited under its walls the attack of Gustavus, who having effected his junction with the Saxon army, now pursued the imperialists, in order to risk a general battle. The two armies were nearly equal in point of numbers; and Tilly having been induced, by the eagerness of some of his officers, to abandon the position he had taken up, was successful in his attack upon the Saxon part of the allied army, but was subsequently completely defeated by Gustavus. The slaughter of the imperial forces was dreadful: numbers were taken prisoners; and the rout of the rest was so complete that for many days not three thousand Austrians could be collected to form the nucleus of a fresh army. The way to Vienna and the hereditary dominions of the house of Austria was now open to the Swedes, and the prospect was very seductive to one ambitious of military glory: but Gustavus was something more than a mere soldier; and, leaving the Saxon army to advance towards the imperial capital, probably with very little hope of its effecting any thing in that quarter more than a mere diversion, he himself pushed forward into the heart of the empire, in order to destroy the catholic league, and free the protestant princes from the trammels which had been imposed upon them.

The necessity of obtaining reinforcements, however, was now pressing; and Gustavus took measures to recruit his forces, as well with native troops as auxiliaries. At the same time, to secure possession of the territories he had already acquired, he left Oxenstiern with a small corps of troops behind him, fixing the chancellor's principal residence at Erfurth, under the title of *legatus ab exercitu*. Here that great minister was in his proper sphere; and although his efforts were

of that quiet and unobtrusive class which gain but little public attention and admiration, yet unrivalled in those times as an administrator, he kept constantly open the means of communication between Sweden and his sovereign's army in all its many marches ; secured the districts which had been freed from the Austrians against fresh attempts ; and by his moderation, punctuality, and sense of justice, so gained the love of the people of Pomerania and Saxony, that universal rejoicings celebrated the anniversary of Gustavus's entrance into Germany as the day of deliverance from tyranny and oppression.

At length, when the king, after having forced his way in arms from the Baltic to the Rhine, took possession of Mayence (or Mentz), and the queen of Sweden prepared to join her husband in that city, Oxenstiern put himself at the head of the troops which had accompanied her from Sweden, and leaving the north in perfect security, proceeded to reinforce his sovereign's army. His march was through a country which the king had already subdued ; and on his arrival at Mayence, he was greeted gladly by his sovereign, who bestowed on him the fine library of the elector, which Oxenstiern, always the thoughtful friend of literature, immediately despatched to one of the Swedish universities.

Plain in his manners, and by no means addicted to flattery, Oxenstiern's first salutation to the king might have awakened the anger of any other monarch. " Why, sire," he exclaimed, " I expected by this time to see you in the Austrian capital." Gustavus, however, could afford to treat the minister's taunt as a jest, because he could prove to him that the banks of the Rhine yielded a more commanding situation for the king of Sweden than Vienna itself. Oxenstiern was not long in acknowledging that the monarch was right ; and long and important conferences ensued between Gustavus and his minister, in which it is supposed that the plans were arranged, not only for obtaining the precise kind and proportion of assistance from France which was necessary to the

views of the king, but also for uniting and consolidating, in favour of Sweden, all the scattered and ill-combined powers, which the divisions, jealousies, and selfishness of the protestant princes of Germany rendered unwieldy and ineffectual.

At the end of the conferences which now took place, not only between Gustavus and his minister, but between the court of Sweden and the ambassadors from various German and other states, the king proceeded on his career of victories, despatching his chancellor to Torgau, in order to frustrate the efforts which the court of Austria was making to detach the weak and vacillating elector of Saxony from the common cause of the German protestants. The statesman acquitted himself of his commission with sagacity and firmness ; and the elector was prevented from openly abandoning his friends, though he was led by evil favourites to act remissly in their behalf. Gustavus then advancing to the Lech, gave Tilly his final defeat at the passage of that river, and proceeded towards Bavaria, leaving Oxenstiern at Mayence as commander-in-chief upon the Rhine. In the neighbourhood of that city many manœuvres succeeded ; in the course of which Oxenstiern showed not only considerable military skill in obliging a large body of troops from the Low Countries to retire with but little success, but also great political sagacity in checking the efforts made by Richelieu to aggrandise France by means of the dissensions of the German princes. News, however, that Wallenstein with an army of sixty thousand men held Gustavus in check under the walls of Nuremberg soon called Oxenstiern from the circles of the Rhine. The king, being determined to defend the Nurembergers to the last, while he formed an intrenched camp around the city, had despatched messengers to all his detachments and allies, in order to hasten their junction with the forces under his own command, which did not exceed sixteen thousand men. William duke of Weimar hurried from Lower Saxony ; and Oxenstiern having collected reinforcements

from the army of the landgrave of Hesse Cassel and the count palatine, advanced with rapid marches to the succour of his master. At Kitzingen he was joined by duke William, and at Windsheim by duke Bernard of Weimar, as well as by the famous Banier ; and then proceeding without a moment's delay, he brought in safety to the little army of his king a reinforcement of fifty thousand men, which at once gave the monarch the advantage over Wallenstein. But the number of troops only served to increase one of the greatest evils under which the king's army already suffered. Want of provision was beginning to be felt in both camps ; and it soon became absolutely necessary for Gustavus to abandon his lines under the walls of Nuremberg, and relieve the town from the famine which was approaching. In the first instance, however, he attempted to storm Wallenstein's camp, but its position rendered it utterly impregnable ; and after having sustained considerable loss, Gustavus was forced to retire. No resource was now left ; and assembling the magistracy of Nuremberg, he told them of his purpose, but at the same time offered to leave them a sufficient garrison to defend the town against all attacks, and promised to remain within such a distance as to enable him to return and fight the enemy, if Wallenstein quitted his camp to form the siege. As a sort of honourable hostage for the performance of this last promise, he left in their hand the chancellor Oxenstiern, who, knowing the honour and punctuality of his master, willingly remained to support and counsel the people of Nuremberg.

Wallenstein, however, decamped as soon as Gustavus was at a sufficient distance to enable him to do so in safety ; and while the Swedish monarch proceeded to attack Bavaria, hurried on into Saxony, in order to force the vacillating elector to abandon the cause of Sweden. At the same time every effort was made by the house of Austria to detach other princes from the ill-connected protestant union ; and Gustavus found himself obliged to turn from his projected conquests in Ba-

varia, and the prospect of still further successes, which some fresh revolts against the Austrian government had opened before him, in order to save the elector of Saxony from utter destruction. Leaving a small force in Bavaria, to make head against the enemy, the king now hastened on to Nuremberg, while the main body of his army proceeded by a different route. From that city and the neighbouring towns he withdrew the greater part of the garrisons; and, accompanied by Oxenstiern, marched rapidly to Arnstadt.

At Nuremberg, and on the march, the king and the minister concerted various plans for uniting the vacillating princes of Germany more firmly in the league; and Oxenstiern received from his sovereign directions to return to Nuremberg, and summon a general meeting of the princes and nobles of the four upper circles at Ulm. Gustavus also conferred upon the chancellor unlimited power in those four upper circles, both in regard to negotiations and hostilities; and after remaining several days with the king at Arnstadt, Oxenstiern proceeded towards the Lower Palatinate, in order to keep the princes and cities in that part of the country firm in their attachment to the 'protestant union. While on his way he received, we are told, a letter from his sovereign, in which Gustavus, as if foreseeing that his career was approaching its termination, expressed his last wishes, and pointed out the plans which it would be necessary to pursue in case of his death. The chancellor had already summoned a meeting of the representatives of the four higher circles, when he received the sad intelligence that his heroic master had fallen at the battle of Lutzen in the arms of victory.*

The deep grief which that event occasioned to the minister may be judged by a peculiar trait. Oxenstiern was a man of that peculiar and happy constitution of mind and body, which enables some statesmen, when surrounded by the utmost difficulties, cares, and anxieties, with the fate of empires and of worlds upon their heads, to cast off thought at will, and with-

* November, A. D. 1632.

draw their minds, when they wish it, from all the tumultuous troubles of their station. He boasted that he always threw off his cares with his clothes when he went to bed; and he was never known to spend more than two sleepless nights during his long and busy life. The first of those nights was after receiving the news of his great monarch's fall—the second took place some years after, when Sweden lost the battle of Nordlingen.

Oxenstiern, however, gave no way to vain regret; and, in common with every other Swede, seemed inspired with double energy from the great necessity of the moment. Instantly quitting Upper Germany, the chancellor hastened towards Saxony, in the hope of consolidating in that quarter the general protestant league; and, with consummate skill and firmness, he veiled from the eyes of the weak and timid princes with whom he was called to act the apprehensions which weighed upon his own mind, and the difficulties which he foresaw arising before him. His firm demeanour saved the common cause of the protestant princes; for the first signs of alarm on the part of Sweden would have sent the lesser sovereigns over to the views of the empire in shoals. Duke Bernard of Wiemar, however, who had taken the command of Gustavus's army on the fall of the king, greatly contributed to support his party, by driving the imperial forces out of Saxony; and although Oxenstiern could not succeed in forming a general confederacy against Austria in the north, he at least prevented, by his presence and negotiations, the immediate defection of others,—Brandenburg, Saxony, and Brunswick. This being secured, and having obtained full powers from his native country, where the young queen Christina was universally recognised, and her authority fixed upon an unshakeable basis, Oxenstiern hastened to the south, in order to meet the states of Upper Germany, who had been summoned to assemble at the small town of Heilbron, on the Neckar. Here was accomplished the greatest efforts of Oxenstiern's

statesmanship ; for he was called upon to meet, to persuade, to unite, and to invigorate men who were full of opposing interests, passions, fears, and weaknesses ; to support the timid, to overawe the unruly, to confirm the vacillating, to bribe the mercenary, to accelerate the slow, and to satisfy the jealousy and gain the assistance of foreign powers, who had but a cold and remote interest in the affairs which involved the prosperity of Germany and Sweden. A multitude of all classes of people flocked to Heilbron ; and, besides deputies from universities and other public bodies, the representatives of twelve free cities, as well as ambassadors from England, France, and Holland, appeared in the assembly.* Oxenstiern, well knowing the influence of vigour, and even of display, upon such occasions, laid aside the simplicity of his habits and his constitutional coldness, showed himself at the meeting with all the splendour of the crown he represented ; and demeaned himself with all the firmness and even vehemence which the most commanding situation could have justified. The general lead in the deliberations was universally permitted to himself ; and he opened the assembly in a long and eloquent speech upon the state of Germany, and ended by showing that nothing but union, perseverance, and activity, could preserve any of the protestant states from the power and vengeance of the empire.

All the deputies present promised, for those they represented, the conduct which Oxenstiern desired ; but when he came to particularise his demands, he found at once all the weaknesses and bad passion of his auditors arrayed against his views. They would not consent to make a general declaration against the emperor ; they would not furnish the necessary supplies for carrying on the war with vigour : every one had something to complain of, every one had something to demand ; every one some new cause for delay. Oxenstiern, however, assumed a tone of authority and power which concealed the real weakness of Sweden : he argued, he threatened,

* April, 1633.

he refused to hear of written deliberations; and he finally obtained in favour of Sweden, first, the general direction of the evangelic league for himself, though it was shackled by a council of spies; secondly, a regular contribution to be paid by the states of 2,500,000 rix dollars for the expenses of the war; and, thirdly, a firmer compact amongst the princes and cities of the four upper circles. Added to this were promises of future indemnification to Sweden for all her exertions, and a proposal to bestow the electorate of Mayence upon Oxenstiern himself. *

It is more than probable that the Swedish minister had aimed at that dignity, and used means to obtain it; but France, who sought to gain possession of Mayence for herself, made such strenuous opposition, that Oxenstiern did not press the states to pursue their purpose. Although at that moment he might probably have realised the most ambitious schemes for himself, Oxenstiern, on the contrary, instead of increasing the Swedish possessions in Germany, determined to divide a great part of what had been already acquired amongst the various princes of the confederacy. By this means he insured their desperate opposition to the house of Austria in defence of the territories thus acquired, and he relieved the Swedes from the necessity of defending unassisted a vast tract of country. The palatinate he at once restored to the heirs of the unfortunate elector Frederic, who had been stripped of his possessions by the emperor. To the landgrave of Hesse-Cassel he promised Munster, Fulda, Paderborn; to the duke of Wurtemberg, a considerable part of the hereditary possessions of Austria, which lay surrounded by his territories; and to duke Bernard of Weimar, a part of Franconia. But no sooner did the German nobles and princes find that the chancellor was in such a liberal mood, than demands of all kinds, totally subversive of every principle of the Germanic constitution, were made upon him with the most unblushing effrontery. The honest though perhaps ambitious Swede could

not restrain the expression of his indignant contempt ; and at length, when some more extravagant demand than all the rest was laid before him, he exclaimed aloud, " Let it be written down in our archives that a German prince made such a request as this to a Swedish gentleman, and that, too, upon German ground ! "

We cannot attempt, even in general terms, to follow all the fortunes of the Swedish arms, nor to relate all the measures which Oxenstiern used in order to prevent the elector of Saxony and others from detaching themselves from the protestant league. For some time the balance of success seemed to remain in favour of the armies of the confederates. In Bavaria especially, which was left exposed to the incursions of the Swedes, by the effects of Wallenstein's animosity to the elector, Bernard of Weimar obtained frequent and signal victories ; but those victories were for a time interrupted, and Oxenstiern involved in very considerable difficulties, by an event as unforeseen as it was difficult to remedy. The soldiers of Gustavus had served during the lifetime of their monarch with zeal, fidelity, and powers of endurance hardly equalled in history, with no advantages but their pay, and with that even often somewhat in arrear. They saw the imperial troops enriching themselves by plundering friends and enemies alike ; but the contributions raised by Gustavus were scarcely sufficient to supply the payment of his troops, and pillage was punished with the utmost severity. Love and admiration kept the native forces of Sweden in complete subjection to the will of their sovereign so long as he lived ; and awe of his talents, as well as fear of his immovable sternness, held even the many mercenaries which formed the bulk of his armies in respect. After his death, however, when they found that the same severe discipline was to be kept up, the same toils to be endured, and the same dangers to be encountered, while their pay was considerably in arrear, and the fruits of their victories went to enrich others, discontent first, then turbulence, and then open mutiny appeared, in the army of duke

Bernard. He paused on his career of conquest; and after fortunately intercepting the letters which the mutineers had despatched to the other armies of Sweden, to notify their proceedings and require co-operation, he transmitted the demands of the soldiery to Oxenstiern.

It is quite clear that Bernard of Weimar, who was loved by the soldiery with little less veneration than had been obtained by Gustavus himself, did not exert himself to stop the progress of discontent, or to repress the turbulence of the troops when they had once ventured upon disobedience. Some historians, indeed, do not fail to point him out as the chief of the mutineers; and there can be no doubt that he profited by his influence in a manner not very creditable to himself. The soldiers demanded that certain towns should be given up to each regiment, as security for the payment of their arrears; and they granted the chancellor a month to consider their proposal, threatening, if he refused it, to pay themselves, and abandon the service of Sweden. Oxenstiern applied to the duke to use his known authority with the soldiers; but Bernard replied, that Gustavus Adolphus had held out to him the prospect of being created duke of Franconia, and that he could do nothing till this expectation was fulfilled, and till he was also created generalissimo of the Swedish armies. The indignation of Oxenstiern now broke forth; and it would appear that, in virtue of the power granted him by Sweden and by the German states, he at first determined to dismiss the duke from the service. But policy soon prevailed: Bernard had hitherto been the most successful general which Sweden had obeyed since the death of the monarch: he was adored by the soldiery, and feared by the enemy. On the other hand, Oxenstiern had neither funds to satisfy the demands of the army nor power to overawe it; and he consequently determined to grant such part of duke Bernard's demands as would implicate him inextricably in hostilities with Austria, and to refuse him that part which would increase his power over the army. To the bishoprics

of Bamberg and Wurtzburg he added Königshofen, and some other territories, to make up the duchy, which was to be held by Swedish investiture; and he found several plausible excuses, as the seniority of Banier, Wrangel, and other officers, for refusing him the chief command of the Swedish armies.

Bernard, however, was satisfied; and the facility with which he quelled the mutiny in the army, and restored discipline and obedience, spoke loudly of his previous negligence or treachery. Such sums of money as could be procured were distributed amongst the officers; and Oxenstiern was obliged to resign to their cupidity several confiscated estates. Spanish troops had in the mean time poured into the upper circles, under the command of the duke of Feria; and general Horn now separated from Bernard, to check their progress. Joined with the palatine of Birkenfeld, Horn drove the Spaniards out of Suabia, across the Black Forest, and through the Breisgau into Alsace, from whence he again pursued them into Bavaria, where their army nearly disbanded, and the duke of Feria died, it is said, of disappointment. In the meanwhile, Bernard of Weimar, with increasing instead of diminished forces, crossed the Danube, and made a demonstration upon Munic; but suddenly turning upon Ratisbon, which was feebly garrisoned, he took that important city, and was then pushing on towards Austria when the approach of Wallenstein, who had been equally successful in the middle circles, caused him to retreat. Wallenstein, however, pursued him no further than the Danube; and taking advantage of a demonstration of the Saxons against Bohemia, retired to that kingdom, where he remained in despite of the emperor's orders, and the entreaties of the elector of Bavaria.

The inactivity of Wallenstein was not without a cause. He had never forgiven his former dismissal from command; and he had long formed the determination of attempting to render himself independent of the emperor, and, by the aid of the Saxons, to raise himself to the throne of Bohemia. Could he have acted sincerely to-

wards the Swedes, it is possible that he might have succeeded in his attempt; but his hatred towards that nation, as well as his peculiar situation with the emperor, rendered his demeanour vacillating and unequal. He was obliged occasionally to hold out specious promises to them as the allies of Saxony, on whose co-operation he founded his great hopes; but he could not prevail upon himself to act in such a manner as to give any assurance of his purposes. Such was his conduct at Munsterberg, some time before he advanced to oppose duke Bernard. At that place he had intrenched himself with 40,000 men: but on the approach of Thurn and Arnheim with a Swedish and Saxon force of 24,000, instead of giving them battle he proposed a suspension of arms; and in after-conferences endeavoured to make terms for joining his army to theirs, and marching to dethrone the emperor, on condition of being created king of Bohemia.

Some time before, Wallenstein had made similar overtures to the French ambassador at Dresden; and Feuquieres, who well knew that Richelieu would be pleased to see any new apple of discord cast upon the course of the German princes, offered to the imperial general both pecuniary aid and the countenance of the French monarch in pursuit of his ambitious designs. He now heard, with doubt and suspicion, however, that so reserved and taciturn a man as Wallenstein had opened his views to the Saxons, and especially to Arnheim, who was known to be in the interest of Austria, and he immediately communicated his anxieties on the subject to Oxenstiern, who was then at Gelhausen. Wallenstein, it would appear, had already found means to negotiate with Oxenstiern; but in the first place, the advantages he held out to the Swedes were not sufficient to tempt the great statesman to risk any thing in his behalf; and in the next, the chancellor both doubted his sincerity in any of his proposals, and more than suspected him of meditating treachery towards the Swedes.

Whether Arnheim, the Saxon general, was sent for

to confer with Oxenstiern at Gelhausen, or whether he spontaneously bore thither Wallenstein's message demanding the aid of several veteran regiments of Swedes for the execution of his plan against the emperor, I do not know; but the chancellor, without positively refusing his demand, did not consent to their march, and communicated to Arnheim his suspicions of Wallenstein's sincerity. The Saxon general, though himself a faithless and double-dealing politician, seems not to have suspected Wallenstein: but Oxenstiern's clear-sighted penetration and accurate reasoning raised doubts in his mind; and on returning to his camp, he found, to his surprise, that the imperial general, in violation of every principle of honour and decency, had attempted to entrap and seize a considerable body of Saxon officers who had visited his camp upon the faith of the armistice which had been so lately concluded. An open breach of the truce on the part of Wallenstein soon followed; and both Saxons and Swedes attributed his conduct to treacherous designs against themselves rather than against the emperor. Such, too, might have been the view of the case which descended to posterity; for many parts of Wallenstein's actions are irreconcilable with any known motive: but the emperor, by depriving him of the command of the armies, and proclaiming him a traitor, showed that the imperial court at least judged his offers to Saxony to have been made in sincerity. Wallenstein, still confident of his own powers, hastened to the strong fortress of Egra, accompanied by that small part of all his vast forces which remained with him after the emperor's proclamation, and eagerly despatched messengers to Oxenstiern and Arnheim, for aid in his present difficulty.

The movements of imperial armies against him, the price put upon his head, and his flight to Egra, were sufficient testimonies of his sincerity; and Oxenstiern, who was now again in the circles of the Rhine, immediately ordered three separate corps to march upon Egra from different parts of the country, under the command

of the duke of Saxe Lauenburg, the count palatine, and the duke of Weimar. Could these three bodies of veteran soldiers have effected their junction with the troops which still remained attached to the rebel general, the imperial throne itself would have been shaken; but ere either of them reached Egra, Wallenstein had fallen under the blows of assassins, and the emperor was freed from one of the greatest perils which he had yet encountered.

Another success also awaited him: the duke of Saxe Lauenburg, either through imprudence or treachery, suffered himself to be decoyed into Egra, after it had fallen by Wallenstein's death into the hands of the imperialists, and surrendered with all his troops. Bernard of Weimar, however, was more cautious; and halted in time, cutting to pieces an imperial regiment which he met in his retreat. But now, for a considerable period, fortune abandoned the protestants' arms, and weakness pervaded their councils. Oxenstiern had, in the meantime, assembled the states of the league at Frankfort on the Maine, and endeavoured to instil into them some degree of union and activity, but in vain; and seeing that greater resources would soon become necessary, he despatched his son John to England, to treat for further assistance. The emperor, on his part, placed his forces under his son, the king of Hungary, with Gallas as their real commander; and both the prince and the general, anxious to distinguish themselves after the fall of Wallenstein, advanced by rapid marches, and laid siege to Ratisbon. In vain the duke of Weimar and count Horn endeavoured to raise the siege of that city by various means. It fell after a vigorous resistance; and the king of Hungary and Gallas led their forces on to new conquests. Donawert was captured, and next Nordlingen was besieged by the united armies of Spain and Austria. The forces under Weimar and Horn marched immediately to its relief; but it was strongly against the advice of the latter general that a battle was risked against the su-

perior force and the superior position of the imperialists. Duke Bernard, however, overbore all opposition; the Swedes attacked the imperial army early in the morning, and, after a long and desperate conflict, were completely routed.* Horn was taken, with a number of other officers; the cannon, baggage, and colours of the Swedes fell into the hands of Austria; and 12,000 veteran soldiers are said to have remained upon the field of battle.

No army sufficient to oppose the progress of the imperial forces could be collected by duke Bernard, who fled to Frankfort; and Oxenstiern in vain appealed to the princes of the protestant league for any assistance. All seemed faithless or terror-stricken; no one was prepared to act; Saxony was evidently negotiating a separate peace for herself with Austria; Brandenburg was treading in her steps; and the whole burden of supporting the war fell at once upon Oxenstiern. Obligated to decide in haste, he recalled the garrisons from a number of small fortresses in Alsace, and, abandoned by the Germans, applied to France for aid, offering to give up Philipsburg to that power, if she would instantly march a body of troops to the banks of the Rhine. The cardinal de Richelieu at once agreed to a proposal which he had long desired; and the approach of the army of the maréchal de la Force restored some degree of confidence to the friends of Sweden. The French general, however, acted but very inefficiently; and no force was ready to defend the territory of Wurtemberg, which was over-run by the Austrian troops immediately after the battle of Nordlingen. France, however, promised to create a diversion in favour of Sweden, by declaring war against Spain, and attacking her possessions in the Netherlands; and she furnished also some small sums to pay a part of the arrears due to the Swedish troops.

Oxenstiern, in the meanwhile, laboured by every honourable means to recall the elector of Saxony to a sense

* Sept. 6. 1634.

of the danger in which the liberties of Germany were placed, representing to him that the moment for making an advantageous peace was certainly not after a casual reverse, and that the only means of saving the German protestants, and upholding the rights of the princes of the empire, were perfect union and renewed exertion. The elector himself was weak, timid, and unprincipled; his minister, Arnheim, was the creature of Austria; Oxenstiern was forced to demand, the emperor was willing, on the contrary, to grant; and under these circumstances the elector would listen to no arguments on the part of Sweden. During the winter which followed the fatal battle of Nordlingen, the treaty between Saxony and Austria was concluded; and the elector prepared to persecute his former allies with all the virulence of apostacy.

Still Oxenstiern yielded not to despair, although, in addition to the defection of Saxony, a renewal of hostilities with Poland was to be expected as the truce approached its conclusion, and although the progress of the Austrians was daily becoming more important. Spires, Treves, Philipsburg itself, fell into the hands of the imperial or Spanish generals, and the aid of France was feeble and ineffectual. A diet of the protestant princes was held at Worms; and at length Oxenstiern determined to proceed in person to Paris and Holland, for the purpose of inviting those states, which had so strongly contributed to engage Sweden in the war, to give her now some powerful support in sustaining it. Ere he went, however, to negotiate with those two powers, on the one hand, he gave every necessary direction for treating with Poland on the other. A small Swedish army was landed in Prussia, in order that no weakness might appear; but the son of Oxenstiern, who with several other commissioners managed the interests of Sweden, was commanded to obtain a prolonged peace at any honourable sacrifice. The negotiations conducted under the mediation of the count d'Avaux, ambassador from France, were in this respect successful; and yielding a

considerable tract of conquered territory to the demands of Poland, a new treaty was entered into for twenty-one years.

Previous to this final arrangement, Oxenstiern had set out for the court of France. He was received by Richelieu with honours paid to no other ambassador: his whole expenses were defrayed during his stay; and the cardinal visited him in person, a mark of respect which he seldom showed to any one. Some distinction the French minister claimed in deference to the purple, which, perhaps, the protestant Swede might at other times have refused; but Oxenstiern came for important purposes, and not for petty ceremonies; and after some brief conferences, he concluded such arrangements with France as promised greater success for the ensuing campaigns. He thence proceeded to Holland, where he did all that could be done to stimulate the States to greater activity; but on his return to Germany, he found the actual position of the Swedes even worse than when he had left the country. Several other German princes were treating with the emperor: the army of Weimar was exhausted by disease as well as desertion; and against the stronger force of Banier in the north, the elector of Saxony was employing the means of corruption more destructively than the force of arms.

The exertions of Richelieu, however, who now entered eagerly into the interests of Sweden, soon began to be felt. A supply of money enabled duke Bernard to recruit and keep together his army, and similar assistance afforded Banier the means of paying off a part of the arrears due to his troops, and thus removing an argument which the Saxons had used to seduce them from his standard. The French forces, though at first they effected but little in the field, afforded at least such a diversion as saved the Swedish armies from being overwhelmed at once; and though a number of princes and free towns had gone over irrecoverably to the emperor, they became, under the skilful

management of Oxenstiern, more serviceable to Sweden as enemies than they had ever been as friends, supplying readily both provisions and contributions to the armies, that demanded them at the point of the sword, which they had refused to the same forces when they came to protect them from oppression.

At length a signal victory obtained by Banier over the Saxon forces near Dömitz raised again the hopes of the Swedes; and various other successes, followed by another general battle, won by Banier, in 1636, completely restored that nation to a commanding position. About the same time Oxenstiern, who had now been many years absent from his native country, retired to Sweden, leaving the war to be carried on by those whose profession it peculiarly was.

The confederacy of Heilbron was now formally at an end, and the office that he held as its general director no longer existed. He resigned then the authority in Germany, which had been granted him by the regency of Sweden, and appeared once more in the senate as the chancellor of the kingdom, and one of the young queen's guardians. From that period, for several years, his attention seems to have been principally devoted to rearing the mind of Christina in habits of business, and knowledge of political details. He persuaded her, even from her early youth, to take part in the deliberations of the council, and endeavoured to instil into her those principles of government and that political knowledge which long experience had taught him. He had to encounter many difficulties, however, at this time in Sweden: a difference of opinion often existed between himself and the other regents; and the queen-mother, whose incapacity for government was notorious, pressed eagerly for a share of authority. Oxenstiern, it would appear, was justified in excluding her, by the last commands of Gustavus Adolphus himself; but the queen resented his opposition, and, leaving the country, betook herself to Denmark.

In that quarter, too, other storms were gathering. Christian IV., the Danish monarch, used every unjustifiable means to gain advantages over Sweden while she was entangled in the German war: he oppressed her commerce, impeded her in the navigation of the Sound, and showed so plainly what were his intentions, that Oxenstiern, seeing that hostilities were inevitable, resolved to commence them at once, ere the preparations of Denmark had begun. Bold, indeed, was the determination to plunge into a new war, while the forces of Sweden found almost the whole armies of Germany arrayed against them; but at that moment Torstenson was maintaining the cause of his country with renewed success; and the chancellor, while he prepared an irruption into Denmark from Sweden itself, sent orders to that great commander to make a sudden and secret march upon Holstein.

So completely did Torstenson veil his manœuvres, that the whole of Europe contemplated them with surprise and perplexity; and so well was the secret kept at Stockholm, that neither France, Holland, nor Denmark herself, even guessed the approaching attack upon the latter kingdom, till the Swedish armies were actually in Holstein. The Danish monarch was utterly unprepared for resistance; but he hastened to levy forces to oppose Torstenson, who in a few days over-ran the whole duchy. Another Swedish army attacked Shonen with success, and threatened to cross over into Funen and Zealand; and the king of Denmark himself was defeated and wounded in command of his fleet. The only hope was from the efforts of Austria; and the emperor did not fail to make immense exertions to drive the Swedes from Holstein: but, after a faint promise of success, Galas, the imperial general, was defeated and driven from post to post by Torstenson, till the army under his command was absolutely annihilated. Various other reverses induced the king of Denmark to sue for peace on any terms; and, under the mediation of France and Holland, Oxenstiern concluded a treaty

with that prince at Bremesboor*, upon conditions the most advantageous to Sweden that success could command.

Christina, who had now attained her age of majority, and had taken upon herself the government of her dominions, lost no time in testifying her gratitude for the important services which Oxenstiern had just rendered her; and, together with several considerable estates, she bestowed upon him the title of count, and publicly pronounced upon him a high eulogium in an assembly of the states. Always the enlightened friend of literature and science, as every great minister has universally shown himself to be, Oxenstiern was elected chancellor of the university of Upsal; and a great part of his time was, after this period, directed to promote the purposes of that institution. His favour at the court, however, was not so great as it had been; and the strong objections which he raised to several of the princes who aspired to the hand of the young queen have given rise to suspicions that he both sought to retain the chief power in his own hands, and entertained even the wilder scheme of marrying his son Eric to his sovereign. Certain it is, that he thwarted in the most open way the desires of the elector Frederic Wilham of Brandenburg, between whom and Christina a marriage had been proposed even in the time of Gustavus Adolphus; but the reasons that he assigned for his opposition appear perfectly natural and sufficient. The proximity of that prince's dominions to Sweden gave great facilities, it is true, for mutual support and assistance; but, at the same time, it was probable, both from the known character of the elector, and the ordinary propensities of man, that he would fill Sweden, if ever he became its king, with favourites of his own nation, and, perhaps, ultimately reduce it to a mere appendage to the German empire.

In the meantime Torstenson again defeated the imperial troops, and laid siege to Vienna itself. Turenne

* 1615.

and Condé carried on the war upon the part of France. Wrangel succeeded Torstenson in his victories and his command: the emperor was reduced to the very lowest condition; and, in the end, the peace of Munster terminated the war with great advantages to Sweden. In the negotiations for that peace, John Oxenstiern, the son of the chancellor, appeared on the part of Sweden, acting under the direction of his father; but Christina, who began to grow weary of the great authority of her father's chancellor, sent also the famous Salvius to the conferences, for the purpose, it is supposed, of keeping Oxenstiern in check. It is probable that, under other circumstances, the calm firm policy of the great minister might have obtained more important advantages for Sweden; but he was destined to see many of his hopes for the prosperity of his master's child ruined by her own perverseness. Charles Gustavus, first cousin of the young queen, had, during the latter years of the war, appeared several times in Sweden, with a view of obtaining the hand of Christina; and, according to some accounts, his suit was favoured by the chancellor. Christina, however, had other views; and in the end of the year 1649 she signified her intention of naming that prince as her successor to the throne of Sweden. Oxenstiern opposed this purpose with many other influential members of the senate, but in vain; and in the following year, the queen called an assembly of the states, and obtained their nomination of Charles Gustavus, duke of Zweibrucken, as heir to the Swedish crown, in case of her death.

This was but a preparatory step; for, although she went through the ceremony of her coronation, she, early in the following year, evinced a determination to abdicate in favour of her cousin. Oxenstiern again opposed her purpose, and called, to support his views, not only the French ambassador, but Charles Gustavus himself. Christina's resolution, however, was immovable, and doubtless wise; for the irregularity of her conduct, her avowed disrespect for the religion of the

country which she was called to govern, and her weak and capricious character, were day by day alienating the affections of all that were honest in Sweden.*

Long remembered love for her father kept the chancellor still faithful to the interests of his child, although he could not close his eyes to her unworthiness; and he opposed her abdication to the last, replying to those who pointed out the certain proofs of her bad conduct, "Alas, alas! be it as it may, she is nevertheless the daughter of the great Gustavus." Using all his influence with the senate, Oxenstiern induced the senators to present so strong a remonstrance to the queen in 1651, that she consented still to retain the reins of government; but before the year 1654, the nation had become well prepared for an event which was now generally desired. Measures had been concerted to prevent the abdication from giving any shock to the affairs of state; and though the senate made a slight parade of opposition, every thing was arranged to facilitate the queen's descent from the throne.

The states were accordingly assembled in May, 1654; and Christina announced her determination in one of those pompous and rhetorical speeches in which her vanity led her frequently to indulge. She attempted then to induce the states to name her favourite, the baron de Tott, successor to Charles Gustavus, to whom she resigned the throne; but she found them not at all inclined to listen to her nomination. All that she required for herself they granted; but for De Tott she could obtain nothing, although she eagerly pressed to have the title of duke bestowed upon him, offering to elevate count Brahe and Oxenstiern to the same rank. Those two nobles, however, boldly replied, that the ducal coronet had never been granted to any but the sons of their kings, and they only desired to raise themselves above their fel-

* Amelot de la Houssaie declares, that the Swedes were on the point of deposing and confining her, if she had not made a virtue of necessity, and resigned the throne. I find no proof of this, however, though her disgusting immorality and want of principle were too well known to be concealed by wit, or covered by the thin veil of counterfeit philosophy.

lows by their virtues. Christina, although disappointed in this respect, persevered in her determination to withdraw from the restraint of government; and, covering bad passions and evil conduct under the profaned mantle of philosophy, she resigned the throne, with much pomp and display, on the 16th of June, in the same year. All the officers of the crown were present, and took part in the solemnity, except the great chancellor Oxenstiern, who could be induced by no persuasion, either to sanction the act of abdication as a senator, or to appear in the scene in which it was executed. "I promised upon oath, to Gustavus, my king," he replied, to every solicitation, "to place and to maintain the crown of Sweden on the head of his daughter; and it would be criminal and treacherous, on my part, to concur in an act which deprives her of royalty."

The mortifications which he had lately undergone had hastened the ravages which time, aided by extreme labours, was making on the frame of the chancellor; and to discover as he did, shortly after Christina's abdication, that the revenues of the state were diminishing, and that its exchequer was every day becoming more and more in debt, added fresh griefs to those which already oppressed him. At length, a constitution which had been once extremely powerful gave way; and having been seized with a slight fit of apoplexy at the palace, while transacting business with his new sovereign, Charles Gustavus, he retired to his own house, and prepared for death. The end of the great statesman's days was, as he anticipated, approaching; and in the month of August, 1654, he left a world in which he had played a noble and distinguished part.

Axel Oxenstiern was well made, and handsome in person, with a peculiarly noble and expressive countenance. His constitution was robust, and his health through the greater part of life almost uninterrupted; but, in comparison with others of his age and nation, he was extremely moderate, both in eating and drinking; avoiding carefully the excesses into which almost all the immediate followers of Gustavus fell, in conse-

quence of the roving, hazardous, and unsettled life which they were forced to lead, from the outbreaking of the war till its close. Though brave, and, indeed, apparently fearless to the same degree as his great sovereign, he never seems to have sought the character of a general, feeling himself better fitted to act in the cabinet than in the field. Yet, at the same time, it is but fair to state, that in all his military undertakings he was successful, keeping several newly-acquired and inimical provinces in perfect subjection with a very small force, and leading, on various occasions, considerable detachments to join his sovereign, through the midst of defensible countries, and in the face of infinitely superior forces.

His erudition was very extensive and also very profound; and various compositions are supposed to have issued from his pen, under the names of other persons, which, were the fact clearly established, would place him high in the ranks of literature. As a statesman, perhaps, his character stands above that of any other in the history of modern Europe; for he showed all those qualities which are requisite in the great and perilous course of the politician, with most of those virtues which adorn any station, and exalt the man higher than the minister. He was penetrating, clear-sighted, firm, courageous, enduring, comprehensive in his views, prompt in his decisions, persevering in his purposes: yet he was just, humane, a lover of truth, amenable to reason, candid in the acknowledgment of his faults, liberal in his judgment of others, devotedly attached to those he loved, yet neither tenacious of resentment, nor sanguinary in his enmities.

Where is the minister who has not been charged with ambition? Perhaps, in regard to the electorate of Mayence, Oxenstiern did covet and strive for an honour which was not an empty one, a dignity which would have conferred real power; but the moment he found that his pursuit of that object would impede the execution of his dead sovereign's designs, and might prove detrimental rather than beneficial to his country, he abandoned it without

a murmur. It might be, also, that he showed himself, as Schiller declares he did, both unscrupulous in the distribution of territories over which he had no right but that of the sword, and forgetful of the constitution of the Germanic empire. But we must remember that those who could have disputed his title to distribute founded their own claims on the same right by which he possessed, and that the persons to whom he gave were members of that very empire, and struggling for its privileges against those who were thus stripped. It is true that Gustavus came to uphold the constitution of the Germanic empire, not to destroy it ; but the emperor himself had set the example of making a private contention the plea for stripping an elector of his territories, and those who supported him in injustice exposed themselves to retaliation.

If Oxenstiern sought to wed his son to the queen Christina, he pursued his purpose with such moderation as to leave no trace of his endeavours, except in surmise ; and if he clung to power, his enemies themselves never denied that he used it ever for the good of his country. That he was occasionally haughty and passionate when he was assailed by the mean, the base, and the interested, there can be no doubt ; and that he often treated with contemptuous indignity the feeble, selfish, vacillating princes, who surrounded him in the Thirty Years' War, is equally true : but where he met with talents or with virtues he was sure to show them honour, and the native dignity of his character, which those who had none stigmatised as cold pride, guarded him against the commission of any mean and pitiful acts.

He treated as an equal with Richelieu, the most penetrating and politic man of his age, and was not overreached ; but Oxenstiern had great advantages which more than equalled the cardinal's powers of deceit and subtilty. He was not so vain, arrogant, ostentatious, or ambitious. So far from loving to govern alone, and seeking for all the fame, and all the advantages proceeding from every great act, he retired from notice, as

much as it was possible to do, in a responsible situation ; and it is difficult to prove that many of those strokes of policy, which we are internally convinced emanated from his mind, were not suggested or modified by others. * But still, on all occasions where he does appear, the same masterly intellect, the same vigorous firmness, the same noble moderation, the same comprehensive mind, stand forth, and show him as at once one of the noblest and one of the wisest of his age.

* Thus I have not placed the famous constitution given to Sweden after Gustavus's death amongst the acts of Oxenstiern, to whom it is usually ascribed, because some doubts exist in my mind as to whether it might not be as a part or a whole dictated by the king himself at his last interview with his minister, or in one of the letters which he wrote to him shortly before the battle of Lutzen.

**GASPAR DE GUZMAN, COUNT OLIVAREZ,
DUKE OF SAN LUCAR.**

BORN ABOUT 1587, DIED A.D. 1643.

ISSUING from a distinguished branch of the ancient and renowned family of Guzman, possessing considerable wealth, and third count of Olivarez, the minister afterwards famous as the count-duke, met with few difficulties in his ascent to power. His father, a Castilian nobleman of some talent, was successively ambassador at Rome, viceroy of Sicily and Naples, and counsellor of state to Philip III. During his embassy to the papal court, under the pontificate of Sextus V., the ambassador inhabited a house said to have been built on the ruins of the old palace of Nero, and in this dwelling was born the future minister; an event from which his enemies did not fail, at an after period, to insinuate that the spirit of the Roman tyrant had entered into the bosom of the infant. After the return of his father to Spain, Olivarez was sent to the university of Salamanca, where he pursued his studies with very great distinction; and thence proceeded to Madrid, where the court offered at that time a scene of vice and corruption, from which it was difficult for a young man to escape unsullied. Much that he saw,—the venality, the fraud, and the insincerity, which were apparent in every saloon and every office, acting upon a heart naturally disinterested, but suspicious, gave that sternness to his integrity, and that haughty jealousy to his demeanour which afterwards characterised all his proceedings during his continuance in power. The softer and the more fascinating vices, however, of the Spanish court,—those which did not disgust by their grossness, nor shock by their baseness, could hardly fail

to prove alluring to one young, wealthy, and powerful, who found facilities of all kinds on the path of passion. He thus spent some time at Madrid in the society of the fair, but not chaste dames, with which that capital was then crowded, the votary of a softer power than the ambition which was to follow after. To dwell upon such scenes is rarely necessary, and never pleasing, and therefore we shall not pursue the course of Olivarez through the various amours which, truly or falsely, have been attributed to him by those who have collected the anecdotes of his early life. On one attachment of the kind, however, it may be necessary to pause, as the consequences of this adventure became afterwards of importance, and are connected with some of the most singular acts and some of the most curious traits of character in the life of the count himself.

Various branches of the family of Spinola had emigrated from Genoa during the reign of Philip II., and had settled in Spain, where they were received into the ranks of the nobility, and distinguished themselves highly both in civil and military employments. One of this house married a Spanish lady, and by her had three daughters of extraordinary beauty; the eldest of whom, Margueret, left with little but an unfortunate dowry of loveliness, was besieged with views but little honourable by a number of the nobles of a dissolute court; and at length choosing more from interest than passion, she yielded to don Francesco de Valeazar, alcade of the court, a man of great wealth and influence, but advanced in years. At the time that Olivarez arrived in Madrid she was the acknowledged mistress of Valeazar; but seeing her, and becoming fascinated with her beauty, he easily obtained means of introducing himself to her, and found little difficulty in persuading a dissolute woman to deceive a man for whom she entertained no affection. This intercourse continued for some time, and at length a son was born, the paternity of which was very doubtful. The alcade, however, was the reputed father; but feeling any thing

but secure of the fidelity of his mistress, Valeazar took but little charge of the child; who, till he reached the age of eighteen, never received any name but that of Julian, which had been given him at his baptism. His mother, however, having died, and left him in poverty, he obtained permission of the alcade to take the name of Valeazar; and though feeling strongly convinced that the child was not his own, that officer obtained for him a small post in South America, the golden land of all the adventurous spirits of the age.

Educated without any care by a mother who had showed herself devoid of all principle, it was not to be expected that the young adventurer would distinguish himself by virtue, although he is generally admitted to have possessed considerable talent. His career in Mexico is not well ascertained, but it is confidently stated that he there committed crimes for which he was sentenced to the galleys. From that fate, however, he was saved by the viceroy, who was an intimate friend of his reputed father; and having returned to Spain, in which country the alcade had in the meantime died, he found himself utterly destitute. He then is said to have entered the army as a simple soldier, and served for some years in Flanders and Italy, showing considerable courage and talent, but at the same time evincing a strong disposition to make his manners and demeanour harmonise with the rank of life into which he had now fallen. From Italy he returned in 1631 or 1632 nearly as poor as he went, but he was destined to find high fortunes awaiting him.

In the meantime he who was probably the real father of this unfortunate man had gradually changed his pursuits, casting aside love for ambition, and was seeking advancement at the court, where he was first appointed one of the gentlemen of the bedchamber to Philip, the heir-apparent to the throne. Olivarez applied himself diligently to gain the young prince's favour; and by his wit, his varied learning, and his knowledge of his master's foibles, he made considerable progress. A most

formidable opponent existed in the person of the count de Lemos, a nobleman who had been placed near the prince by the duke of Lerma, then prime-minister, and whose personal graces, vigour of mind, and dignity of character, gave him great advantages over the young Olivarez. Lemos, however, applied himself more to gain the favour of the king, Philip III., than that of the prince; and to support the falling authority of his own uncle, the cardinal-duke of Lerma, against the machinations of that minister's ungrateful son, the duke of Uceda.* The house of Guzman, however, lent their aid to Uceda: the bold frankness of the count de Lemos only offended the weak king, and the duke of Lerma was, in the end, disgraced and banished from the court.

All the offices which had been held by Lerma were now at once seized upon by Uceda, except that of superintendent of the prince's education; which was filled for some days by the condé de Paredes, but was soon resigned by that nobleman. Every effort was now made by the family of Olivarez to gain it for one of their connections; and at length Uceda bestowed it on don Baltazar de Zuñiga, uncle of the future minister. During the rest of the life of Philip III. Olivarez remained unnoticed, but still advancing in the favour of the prince, over whom his power became infinite after the removal of Lemos and his friends. At length, in the year 1621, Philip IV. succeeded to the throne of Spain, at the age of sixteen; but, far from obeying the directions of his father, who had recommended to him to retain the ministers already in office, one of his first acts was to dismiss Uceda, and to name as prime minister his former preceptor, don Baltazar de Zuñiga.

This appointment, however, seems to have been merely made at the desire of Olivarez, who, for the time, affected a degree of humility and disinterested-

* I do not know why this name is constantly written Uceda in English. Cespedes and all the old Spanish authors which I have met with always use the letter c and not z.

ness which deceived the king, but not the people. At the same time the favourite governed under the name of his uncle, and, Cespedes implies, even openly shared in the administration. The favour of the monarch daily increased, instead of diminishing, and the effects thereof soon became apparent. Olivarez was appointed to various high offices, was named duke of San Lucar, and raised to the rank of grandee of Spain, with the universal applause of the people, *gran valedor de novidades*, as the historian calls the Spanish nation. Olivarez now threw off the mask: his uncle, don Baltazar, resigned his power into his nephew's hands, and died shortly after, leaving the favourite to assume the title as well as the functions of minister.

The first acts of Olivarez showed a disposition to severity, which was afterwards somewhat mitigated, but which never wholly left him. His predecessor, the duke of Uceda, was arrested, and thrown into prison. The famous duke of Ossuna, at the moment that he thought himself likely to be called into favour and authority, was seized, and conveyed to the castle of Almeida. His trial was immediately commenced, a number of follies, and a number of crimes offering fair foundation for the charge against him; but the proceedings were protracted with cruel delay, and, at the end of three years, he died, still a prisoner.* Uceda escaped more gently, having been condemned to fine and exile; but the king remitted the punishment, gave him letters of abolition, and named him to the viceroyalty of Catalonia, which I am led to believe he declined.† At the same time the padre Aliaga, confessor to the late king and grand inquisitor, received a command to retire to his convent, and was ultimately deprived of his rank in the inquisition, with the consent of the pope.

Still more severe measures, however, were pursued towards the duke of Lerma and his favourite Cal-

* Some say of dropsy, some of apoplexy, some of poison taken voluntarily.

† Cespedes leaves the matter in doubt.

deron. The former was proceeded against criminally on account of various alleged peculations committed while he held the reins of government; and though his rank in the Roman hierarchy, as cardinal, shielded him from death or imprisonment, he was stripped of all his wealth, and even of his hereditary property, in order to make up the sum of 1,400,000 crowns, which he was alleged to have obtained unjustly by a monopoly of the corn from Sicily. The latter, don Rodrigo de Calderon, count of Oliva, who, from a low origin, had risen, by the favour of Lerma, to wealth, power, and rank, — a man of talent, application, and many high and noble qualities, but one on whom fortune had acted unfavourably in rendering him haughty and ostentatious, — was made a sacrifice to the hatred of the people he had often insulted, and to the jealousy of men less worthy than himself. If he had not borne prosperity meekly, he at least endured adversity with the dauntless fortitude of a man of high courage, and the calm humility of a Christian. Long imprisonment, cruel delays, and brutal insults served but to call forth virtues in him which had previously lain dormant; and when at length he was executed for crimes that no one believed he had committed, his demeanour was so noble and so affecting, that even his enemies shed tears, and regretted the act they had thus consummated.

These first proceedings of the new minister tended to render him both loved and feared by the populace; for those whom he struck were old favourites of the court, and, consequently, had long been objects of popular hatred. Nor were external events less favourable on his accession to power. Marmora, which had been besieged by an army of 50,000 Moors, was relieved, and the attacking force defeated. Don Frederic, of Toledo, gained several advantages over the Dutch, who were driven about the same time from the Moluccas, while the famous Spinola was sent to take the command in the Low Countries, and laid siege to Juliers, which surrendered after a resistance of five months. At the same

time, the Spanish and the imperial troops upon the Rhine were gaining constant advantages over the unfortunate Palatine, and every thing gave Olivarez reason to hope that the power of the house of Austria was rising triumphant above its rivals. His plans and his ambition increased with these successes, but still he was not so much without foresight as he is frequently represented to have been ; and although he could not but perceive that France was the enemy with which Spain would have ultimately to contend, yet he lost no opportunity, especially at this point of his career, to conciliate his dangerous neighbour, and thus keep the Spanish armies free to pursue the war against Holland. Even the breaking of the truce with the states-general, which has often been attributed to Olivarez as a fault, can scarcely be fixed upon him with any certainty.* Indeed it would appear to have been determined upon by the duke of Uceda long before the count-duke had any share of power ; and, whether peace was broken by his authority or not, it is certain that the Spanish and Dutch forces had been actually opposed to each other prior to the death of Philip III. No doubt, however, can be entertained that Olivarez was willing to carry on the war against Holland with vigour and perseverance ; and, could he have prevented himself from being drawn into contention with other powers, his hostilities against the united states might have been politic though not just. Towards the end of a long truce, it was either necessary to recognise the independence of the states, or to continue the war in order to re-establish the dominion of Spain. To have suffered the truce to be prolonged, would have been a virtual resignation of the claims of the Spanish crown, without any of the advantages which might be hoped from either of the more direct modes of proceeding. To resign the claims of Spain, and acknowledge the independence of Holland, even receiving some indemnification, Olivarez could not attempt ; for he well knew that

* Olivarez in his exculpation does not deny the act, but defends the policy.

not only the king, but the whole Spanish nation, would oppose him as one man ; and even if the design ever crossed his mind, which probably it never did, — for we must not forget that Olivarez was a Spaniard, — it would have been insanity to have attempted its execution.

Towards the end of the preceding reign, took place the occupation of the Valteline and the building of forts in that district, of which we have already spoken *, and the threats of France now produced negotiations for the re-establishment of the sovereignty of the Grisons. These negotiations ended in a vague treaty, the terms of which were never observed, but which served to lull the suspicions of France, then struggling with a war against the huguenots, and ruled by the weak uncertain hands of Luines and Vieville. Finding, however, that even the latter began to awake from his lethargy and to renew the threats which had before been used in regard to the Valteline, Olivarez — who fell into the common error of mistaking the character of his opponents, and attributed to the French many of the distinctive traits of the Spanish people — determined to place the strong places of the Valteline as a deposit in the hands of the pope, imagining that French ministers would show as much scrupulous reverence for the holy see as was testified on all occasions by the government of Spain.

Thus rested the whole affair till the staff of rule in France fell into the vigorous grasp of Richelieu ; but in the mean time the arrangement made by the count-duke was looked upon in Spain as a fine stroke of policy. The satisfaction which was thus spread through the country was somewhat diminished by the news of Spinola having been forced to raise the siege of Bergen-op-Zoom ; but the canonisation of four Spanish saints, which Olivarez had obtained from the willing pontiff, was sufficient to cast a lustre over the whole of the year 1622 ; and successes on the side of Germany, as well as some brilliant but unprolific exploits upon the

* See Life of Richelieu.

coast of Africa, served to keep the nation in high good humour with the minister.

The following year also presented to the Spanish people several of those scenes of splendour and display which excite the imagination and render a haughty nation content with itself and with all attached to it. For many months negotiations had been carried on between the Spanish and the English courts concerning the marriage of prince Charles, afterwards the unfortunate king, Charles I., with the infanta, sister of Philip IV. ; and in the course of the ensuing year that prince, together with his favourite, Buckingham, appeared at Madrid. Charles affected to have come incognito, but he was received with royal honours. Olivarez, however, taking advantage of the imprudent step which the English prince had committed, sought to obtain more advantageous terms for Spain. The pope, probably at his suggestion, delayed the necessary dispensations for the marriage of the infanta ; and every art was used both to increase the inclination of the prince for the proposed alliance, and yet to exact hard conditions. Buckingham, whose pride and licentiousness soon rendered him odious, is reported to have attempted the virtue of the duchess Olivarez, during his visit to Spain, with the same libertine vehemence which he afterwards displayed towards the young queen of France. The facts, however, have never been clearly ascertained ; but either in the fear of encountering Spanish revenge, as a consequence of his unprincipled audacity, or of seeing the prince himself fall a victim to the imprudent step which he had counselled, Buckingham induced Charles to make a somewhat hasty retreat from the Spanish court, and subsequently broke off the treaty of marriage, which all the diplomatic skill of Olivarez was unable afterwards to renew. The count-duke viewed with jealousy, indeed, and laboured hard to frustrate the negotiations which immediately afterwards took place between France and England on the same subject, but it was in vain ; and the inauspicious marriage between Charles and Henrietta took place.

In the mean time, Holland was left alone to contend with Spain, Olivarez gained various advantages, and the states met with several reverses. Prince Maurice was forced to abandon the attempt which he had made upon Antwerp with considerable loss; and during the same year 160 Dutch vessels were seized in Spanish ports, where they were trading under the flag of the Hanse towns. Various events affecting the fortunes of the house of Austria took place about this time both in Germany and Italy; but having given a sketch of these in the preceding pages*, we shall only notice them casually in their order, directing our principal attention to the facts with which the name of Olivarez is immediately connected. Thus the affairs of Flanders and the Indies, of the coast of Africa and the internal policy of Spain, require more particular notice in this place than even the events of greater magnitude which occurred in Germany and Italy.

Indeed the state of Spain itself, at the period of the accession of Philip IV., is the most important point for the consideration of all who would examine the actions of Olivarez as those of a celebrated statesman; for it was the error of not justly appreciating the exact condition of the country he had to rule, in relation to his external enterprises, which was the great defect in the policy of the count-duke. It is true that, had the same personages only remained upon the political scene, which occupied it on his first entrance into office, had others as weak succeeded them, the vast designs of the Spanish minister, notwithstanding the consummate talents of the brothers of Nassau, and the exhausted state of the finances of Spain, would probably have been crowned with success. The influence of the house of Austria might have been permanently established in Germany on the complete abasement of all the inferior princes: in Italy it might also have been rendered permanent, and Holland might have been yet reduced to great concessions; but Richelieu, Gustavus Adolphus,

* See *Life of Richelieu* and *Life of Oxenstiern*.

Oxenstiern, Cromwell, had yet to appear; and Olivarez had not any right to calculate upon no man of talent rising up to oppose him amongst all the many states whose interests were adverse to those of Spain. His designs were too vast for his resources, — such has been the principal charge against him as a politician, and in some degree this charge is well founded, but by no means to that degree which it seems to reach at first sight. In order to form a just opinion on this subject, we must remember, that into many of his greatest undertakings and into the long and ruinous war which at length utterly exhausted the powers of Spain, Olivarez was impelled by the acts of his opponents, as well as by his own views of aggrandising Spain; and it must not be forgotten that he laboured hard, and not unwisely, both to procrastinate the moment of actual contest, and, while he did thus procrastinate, to recruit the resources, diminish the expenses, and consolidate the powers of the country, whose energies he was called upon to wield to the best advantage. Had he appreciated with perfect accuracy all the circumstances, he would have made greater sacrifices, forborne many tempting advantages, and yielded many points of national pride, if not of national honour, in order to direct his uninterrupted efforts to remedy the internal diseases of the Spanish monarchy; but even had he done so, it is probable that the designs of Richelieu would have forced him into the war which he sought to avoid. As it was, his error lay in overstepping a very narrow and ill-defined line. The result seems to show that he was wrong: but a very small portion more of moderation would have rendered him right.

‘In regard to the state of Spain, I shall have to speak more fully hereafter, when I come to compare it with the condition of its great rival France. The promulgation, however, of several important laws at the time of which I now treat, renders it necessary to say that Olivarez, on his becoming minister, was placed in one of the most difficult positions, and undertook one of the most laborious tasks that it is possible to con-

ceive. The discovery of the New World was the first step towards the ruin of Spain. It drained that country of its enterprising spirits; it afforded revenues without exertion; and, acting upon the nation, like plentiful food without labour upon an individual, it debilitated the whole people, and unstrung the nerves of industry throughout the land. The long wars of Philip II. and Philip III., the loss of Holland, the evils of divided monarchy and widely separated territories, all contributed to diminish the finances of the state, and to impoverish those very kingdoms which had already lost their activity under the influence of a sudden and unnatural influx of wealth. Industry returned not with necessity: whatever enterprise remained sought other shores where encouragement was certain and success probable; the people, long habituated to idleness, found privation preferable to exertion; the ground remained nearly uncultivated; the population became thinner every day; those who drew a certain portion of riches from either the New World, or from large estates, crowded into the principal towns; and the rest of the people lived in poverty and wretchedness, whether as poor and unemployed gentlemen, or as indolent and half-starved artisans. The picture presented of a Spanish country gentleman's dwelling, by the great Cervantes, its poverty, its misery, is not alone applicable to that of Don Quixote.* It is the portrait of a whole class. The only persons who had continued to cultivate in Spain the arts of industry with unremitting perseverance and success, had been the Morescos, or descendants of the ancient Moors; but these had suffered banishment under the government

* Through the whole of the inimitable book to which I refer runs a sad deep moral satire, imperceptible to those who are not well acquainted with the state of Spain at that time, and even darkly concealed from the people of the age in which it was written, lest the safety of the writer should have been compromised. Let it not be supposed that Cervantes sought to display nothing but the wanderings of a pure and mighty mind overthrown, or the burlesque adventures of an humorous peasant. He had undoubtedly far higher and nobler objects in view, in every page reading some moral lesson, pointing out some glaring evil, suggesting some great improvement, or lashing some reigning vice; and the history of the knight of La Mancha, that most perfect of gentlemen, and his squire, however brilliant and admirable in itself, is but the vehicle for more important matter.

of Lerma, whose weakness, profusion, and irregularity had given the last stroke to the finances of the state.

Such was the situation of Spain, when Olivarez came into power; and to bring remedies to the diseases which afflicted it, was one of the first steps of that minister. On the 10th of February, 1624, he published a decree, by which an immense number of useless officers were at once dismissed. Added to this, he announced several sumptuary laws of very doubtful policy, forbidding any persons whatever to entertain more than eighteen domestic servants, and regulating the dress of all classes, with provisions which were offensive and easily to be evaded. But, at the same time, every means was taken to encourage persons in the lower ranks to marry, in order to supply the lamentable want of a labouring population. A newly married man was exempt from all taxes for four years, and a man with six children was free for life. Laws against emigration also were enacted; measures were employed to prevent the people of the provinces from flocking into the large towns; and the most extraordinary privileges and immunities were held out to those who devoted themselves to agriculture or to manufactures. At the same time, advantages of every kind were offered to all foreign manufacturers, agriculturists, and artisans who chose to settle in Spain.

The end of the year 1624, and the beginning of 1625, were inauspicious towards Spain. On the coasts of South America, as well as on those of Flanders, the Dutch fleets made great progress. France furnished the states with money, and engaged them by treaty not to make peace with Spain: the marquis de Crœuvres, without showing any great respect for the papal authority, took possession of the Valteline, and drove out the pontifical troops; and every thing announced that a new and powerful hand had seized the reins of government in France. Olivarez, however, did not show himself unequal to the occasion. Taken by surprise, indeed, in regard to the Valteline, he could not recover that im-

portant territory, but four fleets were instantly equipped in Spanish ports. The duke of Feria was ordered to march to the relief of Genoa, now attacked by the French and Savoyards; the galleys of the catholic king hastened to the support of that city; a league was entered into between Spain, Lucca, Tuscany, Modena, and Parma, to oppose the progress of the invaders; and the armies of France and Savoy were obliged to abandon all they had obtained, and retreat with loss from the territory they had divided in the anticipation of conquest. The tide of affairs, too, turned on the coast of America; a great part of what had been seized by the Dutch was regained by Spain, and a dangerous insurrection was appeased without serious inconvenience. The death of Maurice of Nassau, also, was considered by the Spaniards as equal to a victory; and the great advantages gained by the emperor tended to strengthen all branches of the house of Austria.

Nevertheless, Olivarez most wisely determined, as far as possible, to avoid entering into a general war. Although the French and Spanish armies had encountered each other in the field, and though various acts of direct hostility had been committed by each country against the other, yet they were not held to be in an absolute state of warfare; and the Spanish minister sought eagerly and skilfully to calm the differences that existed between the two kingdoms. The necessity of doing so became the more obvious while the negotiations were going on, from symptoms of insurrection in various parts of Spain. The Catalonians especially, believing the government to be entangled in a foreign war, and counting upon support from France in case of actual revolt, refused all subsidies; and even while the court was present at Barcelona, one of the king's principal officers was stabbed in the assembly of the states of the province. Olivarez immediately withdrew with the monarch from that city; but the people imputed even that very justifiable act to bad

designs, and new signs of resistance manifested themselves.

Luckily for Spain, it happened that France was engaged in suppressing internal dissensions likewise, that her arms in Italy had received a severe check, and that her finances were in a state of terrible disorder. The overtures of Olivarez were willingly listened to by Richelieu; and, and at the very time when the Spanish provinces were preparing to resist, France concluded a treaty with Spain, which deprived the opponents of the Spanish minister of all their hopes of support. The Catalonians instantly became tranquil, the subsidies were voted, and by the transactions which ensued, Olivarez obtained conditions from even the keen-sighted Richelieu, which rendered the duke of Savoy an enemy to France.

At the same time, Olivarez diminished considerably the expenses of the war against Holland and England, but he diminished also its vigour, and the Dutch in consequence gained many advantages. Eager to see the court of France embroiled with its protestant subjects, the count-duke entered into a secret treaty with France, by which he engaged that the Spanish fleet should blockade the port of La Rochelle, while the army of Louis XIII. besieged that city by land; but having little inclination to free the hands of the French minister, by aiding him to gain a complete triumph over the factions which had so long distracted France, Olivarez is supposed to have given secret orders to don Frederic of Toledo, the Spanish admiral, which prevented him from yielding any real assistance to the besieging force. During the blockade of Rochelle, however, the death of Vincent, duke of Mantua, created a cause of contention between France and Spain. The duke of Nevers, legitimate successor of the late sovereign of Mantua, was a Frenchman by birth; and lest that nation should obtain by his means the footing in Italy, for which she had been so long striving, against all the precautions of Spain, Olivarez was tempted to abandon the course he

had hitherto pursued, and to risk a general war. The occasion, it is true, seemed favourable; Richelieu was occupied with the siege of Rochelle, to which place England held out promises of such assistance as would have protracted the defence to an indefinite period. The protestants of the south of France were maintaining themselves in open insurrection; the duke of Savoy was willing to share in the spoil of Mantua, and to exclude the French from Italy; and the Spanish provinces voted a large donation to supply the necessities of the state. Olivarez, therefore, acting in concert with the emperor, opposed the rights of the duke of Nevers, and for a time was completely successful: Montferrat was over-run and its principal strong places taken; Mantua itself ultimately fell before the arms of the emperor, and the unfortunate duke found himself stripped of all his dominions. But ere these advantages were secured, Rochelle had surrendered; Richelieu had declared France the protector of the duke of Mantua; Louis XIII. forced the pass of Suza, and in the campaigns which we have already mentioned * recovered part of that which the duke had lost, gaining other successes, which ended ultimately in a new treaty of peace.

In the mean time Holland had obtained tremendous advantages, both by land and sea, in Flanders and in America. The famous Spinola, called from the Low Countries into Italy, had been ill treated by Olivarez, blamed and neglected, and dying of disappointment and indignation, left no one who could supply his place. Flanders, abandoned to the defence of inefficient generals, began to show signs of disaffection towards the crown of Spain. Cabals were formed in various cities; and at length a regular conspiracy took place, for the purpose either of establishing a republic in imitation of Holland, or of calling in the troops of France. The views of the conspirators, however, were communicated by the duke of Arschot to the archduchess, governess of the Netherlands, who, by his advice, took means to frus-

* See Life of Richelieu

trate their attempts, without punishing the offenders. Olivarez, however, was not so moderate ; and a number of the nobles of Flanders were arrested and treated with various degrees of severity.

Feeling every day more and more the financial embarrassments of the state, Olivarez now sought even to conclude a peace with Holland, but in vain. Spain intrigued with all the disaffected in France ; and France, whose views for the abasement of the house of Austria were now beginning to expand, did not fail to stimulate and support all the external enemies of Spain. Every effort made by Olivarez towards a peace was frustrated by the diplomacy of Richelieu, who was already engaged in open hostilities against the emperor, while the Spanish monarch naturally afforded all the assistance in his power to the imperial branch of his own family. Such a state of covert warfare could not of course endure for any great length of time ; and Olivarez, seeing that a rupture must eventually take place, determined that the first advantages to be gained by it should be in favour of the house of Austria. After the fatal battle of Nordlingen, Philipsburg had been given up to France by the Swedes, and the elector of Trèves had long shown his inclination to aid the enemies of Spain and the empire. Towards the Rhine the eyes of all Europe were turned, as it seemed at that moment that the destinies of many states were about to be decided upon the banks of that river. There, then, the first blow was struck by Spain against that powerful enemy, who never ceased the hostilities which ensued, from that moment, till the resources of the peninsula were totally exhausted. Trèves and Philipsburg were both taken by the Spaniards, and the elector of the former place was carried away a prisoner to Antwerp.

Richelieu instantly sent a herald to Brussels to declare war, and a French army entered the Low Countries ; but fortune had not yet become favourable to the arms of France. After some successes on the part of that country, the cardinal-infant, who had now succeeded the

archduchess in the government of Flanders, obtained the superiority, and in return carried the war into Picardy and Champagne. Olivarez, all activity, attacked at the same time the coasts of Provence; and Spain became possessed of several islands in the gulf. A French and Savoyard army were defeated on the banks of the Po; and Galas, with the imperial forces on the Rhine, drove back the cardinal de la Valette, and forced him to take shelter under the cannon of Metz with very considerable loss.

The following year produced advantages still more important. A Spanish army from Flanders invaded Picardy and menaced the capital of France. Guyenne was entered from the Pyrenees; and St. Jean de Luz fell into the hands of Spain. But neither the cardinal-infant who commanded the Spanish army in the north, nor the admiral of Castille who conducted that in the south, pushed the several enterprises in which they were engaged with activity, and all was lost almost as soon as gained. Not so, however, sped the affairs of Italy: Leganez, though neither a skilful nor successful general, opposed the French and Savoyards with advantage, and driving them out of the Milanese, led his troops into the territories of Parma and Placentia. Now was the moment which Olivarez should have chosen to conclude a solid and advantageous peace; and though the dull cloud of diplomacy prevents us from seeing the wishes or even actions of public men on many occasions of importance, yet there is much reason to believe, from the pope having eagerly pressed forward at this time as a mediator, that the count-duke was sincerely desirous of taking advantage of the successes of the Spanish arms to enter into a treaty with France, and to pursue his plans for the restoration of internal prosperity. Richelieu, however, was averse to peace, although the forces of France had not been so successful as he had hoped they might be. He foresaw that both Spain and the empire must soon be exhausted by the many detached points which they were forced to

defend, and his great object of humbling the house of Austria was yet to be obtained. Although the place of conference was named, and the legate had actually set out, yet the negotiation was brought to a sudden close, and the war was resumed as fiercely as ever.

In the mean time the course of Olivarez's private life had been affected by some events on which it may be necessary to pause. He had now been long married to a noble and high-spirited, but somewhat overbearing woman, who, having been appointed to the highest station near the person of the queen, ruled the royal palace with the same despotic authority which her husband exercised in the government of the country at large. Although not blessed with a very easy or placable disposition, the duchess of San Lucar had the wisdom to know that her interests and her happiness were in the hands of her husband; and to promote his views all her efforts were directed, while in domestic life, without any very extraordinary degree of affection, they lived happily. No heir had sprung from this union, and for some years Olivarez and his wife employed a part of their large revenues in embellishing their beautiful country seat in the neighbourhood of Madrid, and in founding a splendid monastery of Dominicans on their estate; while the count's nephew, don Louis de Haro, son of the marquis de Carpio, was considered the heir of the minister, and his successor in power.

A little before the period to which we have now brought the narrative of the public life of Olivarez, Julian Valcazar, son of Margueret Spinola, and reputed son of the alcade Valcazar, returned to Spain, and after living for some time in great poverty, made acquaintance with a girl, whom we find called donna Isabella de Azueda, to whom he was about to be married, when by some means, in regard to which I have no information, he attracted the attention of the count-duke. Handsome in person, and possessing considerable abilities, the minister was well pleased to believe him his son, as Julian's birth had taken place at the period of his own

intrigue with Margueret Spinola. For a considerable time his purposes in the young man's favour do not seem to have taken any decided form, and he appears to have contributed to his support, without either openly acknowledging him as his offspring or exercising any authority over him. Even his marriage with Isabella de Azueda was allowed to take place, though the character of the lady was not peculiarly pure; and it is probable that Olivarez at first, struck with the coarseness of his supposed son's manners, carried his intentions no farther than to place don Julian above want, and leave him in the rank of society into which he had naturally fallen.

Rumours, however, of the count having discovered his son began to fly through Madrid; various quarrels took place between Olivarez and the family of Carpio; and hatred towards his presumptive heir, don Louis de Haro, united with the desire of seeing a child of his own succeed to his fortune and his power. Under these circumstances, the minister took the most extraordinary resolution of endeavouring to improve the manners and cultivate the mind of his supposed son, — a difficult undertaking at the age of seven or eight and twenty, — and of formally adopting him as a legitimate child. The mortification and offence which this design inflicted on all the members of the family of Carpio may be easily conceived; but their wrath only hastened the proceedings of the count-duke, and by a solemn act of legitimation executed under the sanction of the king, he acknowledged the child of Margueret Spinola as his son and heir. By the same act, and by the monarch's authority, his name was changed from Julian de Valeazar to Henry Philip de Guzman. All that remained was to elevate his manners to a level with his new rank; and for this purpose the count laboured indefatigably, procuring for him masters of all kinds, and establishing for him a splendid household supported by a princely income. Though not totally ineffectual, the attempt to give him the carriage and manners of a Castilian noble

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was not very successful ; but the partiality of Olivarez soon blinded his eyes to the defects of his legitimised son ; and he now turned his mind both to place him in the road to power and greatness, and to secure for him, by alliance, support amongst the great families of Spain.

The unfortunate marriage which don Henry had contracted, was a great obstacle in the way of the latter purpose ; but Olivarez, passionate in pursuit of all his designs, overbore all obstacles, and determined to annul the union which formed such an impediment. The pope was applied to, who appointed the bishop of Avila to investigate and decide ; but donna Isabella was refractory, and, determined to have a share in the good fortune of her husband, dared to struggle against the will of the minister--producing the authentic proofs of her marriage, and resisting the divorce with all her power. That resistance, however, was unavailing : the good bishop was more pliant to the will of Olivarez, than was the wife of his son ; an informality was discovered in the marriage ceremony, which had been performed in the house of the bride's mother, and not within the precincts of the bride's own parish. This was quite sufficient for the purposes of the minister and the wishes of the bishop, and the marriage was formally annulled.

The ambition of Olivarez now seemed to center in the elevation of his son : the king, led at will by his minister, soon received don Henry—as he was now called—into high favour : his origin, even his defects, were forgotten ; flocks of courtiers besieged his doors ; he was appointed a commander of the order of Calatrava, received the title of Excellency, and was invested with a number of high offices and distinctions.* The next thing was to obtain for him the hand of some lady whose birth and rank would afford firm support to her husband in case of need ; and Olivarez fixed upon the daughter of the constable of Castille, descended from a royal stock,

* It is not quite clear, whether he was ever actually appointed president of the council of the Indies or not, but if not his elevation to that important station was only stopped by his father's fall.

and holding one of the most important posts in the kingdom. However much the pride of the high Castilian noble might be hurt by the union of his daughter with the natural son of the minister, means were found of inducing him to comply, and Henry de Gúzman was formally united to donna Johanna de Velasco. Although the courtiers and the nobles forgot the stigma attached to the birth of don Henry, and the bend sinister of his own arms was not observed by the side of the four royal quarters on the escutcheon of his new bride, the populace had a more retentive memory and keener eyesight, and saluted him, as he rode through the street, by the title of

“ Enrique de dos hombres y dos mugeres,
 “ Hijo de dos padres y de dos madres.”

It must not be supposed, however, that the nobles themselves submitted to the intrusion of the count's illegitimate son into their class without anger. Many were bitterly offended; nor did they fail to testify their discontent; while the wealth and the dignities which Olivarez heaped upon don Henry, and the splendour and the pageantry with which he took care to surround him, only served to excite their envy without diminishing their contempt.

While the factions were growing up at home, which were destined to work the fall of Olivarez, those external wars which were ultimately to give force and importance to internal discontent were pursued by the minister with varied fortune. The success which attended the Spanish arms in 1637 was greater than that obtained by France. By some unaccountable neglect the Valteline, which had been gained and kept with so much difficulty, was lost to the French crown; the duke of Parma, left to his fate by Richelieu, entered into a treaty of peace with Spain, and sacrificed a part of his dominions to preserve the rest; while Leganez attacked the united French and Savoyard army, and obtained a victory near Nice. In Flanders successes and reverses were nearly balanced; but in an

attack upon Leucate, the Spanish troops were defeated by the *maréchal de Schomberg* ; and the islands on the coast of Provence were recovered by France, as well as the post of *St. Jean de Luz*.

An event, however, occurred in the course of the same year, which by the skill of *Olivarez*, was rendered highly serviceable to Spain. The duke of Savoy did not long survive his defeat ; and the moment that he was dead, *Olivarez* instigated his brothers to dispute the regency of the duchy with the sister of *Louis XIII.*, his widow. Civil war soon desolated Savoy, and for a long time a considerable French force was employed in that country, while but small expenses on the part of Spain sustained the princes of Savoy in their struggle for the guardianship of their nephew. In Flanders the cardinal-infant outdid all expectations, with inferior forces holding in check the French on one side, and the Dutch on the other : but the Brazils were now lost to Spain ; and the Swedes, recovering their advantage, were driving the emperor to the brink of ruin.

Olivarez in the mean time had exhausted every means that human ingenuity could devise for the purpose of obtaining money and men to carry on the war. Few and scanty donations from the states had been increased by large loans, some voluntary in reality, and some only apparently so. Confiscations and fines had been resorted to, and the exigency of the state had acquired for the minister a character of cruelty which he probably did not deserve. All ordinary means, however, were now exhausted ; and feeling that peace was absolutely necessary, *Olivarez* again attempted to obtain it even at a considerable sacrifice. But *Richelieu* saw his difficulties with triumph, and still held the sword unsheathed ; while *Olivarez*, bold under misfortune, contemplated the approaching struggle between himself and the Spanish people, and, finding that peace was not to be obtained without a farther effort, only strove to compel France by the success of his arms to grant him repose before the embarrassments of Spain reached their climax.

In this point the policy of Richelieu and Olivarez stand strongly opposed to each other. Both had entered upon power with exhausted finances, and a turbulent, dissatisfied people to hamper the march of government; but Richelieu, before he suffered himself to be tempted into any foreign war, applied himself to gain complete command over the internal resources of his country, by crushing every faction that could oppose his policy, or divide the energies of the state. For this purpose he hesitated not to enter into treaties with the determination of breaking them whenever it was convenient, and to make a thousand promises and stipulations which he never intended to observe. Olivarez was more scrupulous, and had also a more difficult task to perform. The finances of France, it is true, were exhausted, and the people turbulent; but in Spain the very elements of society were injured, though not destroyed. The spirit of industry was at an end in all branches, and the population itself was too scanty to support the drain of long continued warfare. A great commercial or a great manufacturing country can maintain, with advantage to herself and to them, innumerable colonies, and reciprocation of supplies will insure the prosperity of all; but a country where manufactures and commerce are both neglected, will soon find her colonies a burthen rather than a benefit. The former is like an industrious man with plenty of employment and a large family of children, who all contribute to aid their parent's exertions: the latter like an idle spendthrift, to whom every child is an additional burthen. But the immense number and scattered position of the Spanish colonies, though forming an evil of no slight magnitude in the state to which she was now reduced, were not the original cause of that state, and only aided to sink her lower when she was already depressed. The process of her fall had been very simple; and though we have alluded to it before, we must speak more fully thereupon in this place.

At a time when arms was the great trade of Europe,

and when Spain in prosperity of every kind stood amongst the highest of existing nations, the discovery of the mines of South America had, as I have before remarked, drained her of enterprising spirits, and had supplied to her that fatal ore which afforded the means of obtaining both necessities and luxuries without exertion. From that moment her commerce, which had been considerable, rapidly decreased, for she became now merely the purchaser of the commodities of other nations, and no longer the vendor of her own productions. Foreign countries gave her their merchandise, and she returned her silver. Thus failed her commerce, and her manufactures followed it in its fall. There were many countries in Europe eager to raise up their prosperity upon the basis of productive industry, and nothing but the most zealous competition could keep the manufactures of any land upon an equality with those of numerous rivals. To create that eager competition, the stimulus of necessity or of avarice was required; and while Spain saw herself annually inundated with silver, while the means of obtaining from other people, with little trouble, the articles which cost much labour to produce, were constantly present, and commerce made no immediate demand upon the industry of the manufacturing classes, it was a natural consequence, that the fabrication of every thing formerly required for internal consumption or external traffic should gradually fall into disuse. The want of commerce and of manufactures speedily produced a decrease of population; for all history proves the justice of the remark, that where opportunities of obtaining active employment are wanting, the numbers of the people decrease, even though the necessities of life may from any adventitious cause be abundant. It is not only sustenance which man requires as the condition of his numerical increase, but it is sustenance obtained by industry. All these causes combined, produced, and were reciprocally affected by, the utter decline of agriculture. Thus was a country possessing a soil of in-

finite fertility, a climate calculated to mature every necessary and every luxury, a geological structure rich and inexhaustible, an immense extent of sea-coast, and colonies comprising all the finest portions of the globe, reduced with extraordinary rapidity to a state of penury such as nations very seldom know, — without commerce, without manufactures, without agriculture, without a full population; and with revenues depending upon distant mines, with which her communication was never certain, and of which her possession was but ill assured.

It is not, however, to be denied, that all these evils were increased by the internal constitution of the Spanish monarchy. Subdivided into a number of provinces or kingdoms, each possessing peculiar privileges and customary laws, every part of Spain was jealous of the neighbouring division, and all jealous of Castille, as the predominant kingdom from which the royal authority governed the rest. Every state was anxious to shelter itself under its privileges from bearing the burthens which pressed upon the rest; and each, pretending to much greater rights than had ever been conceded to them, were the more ready to break into rebellion the moment any of these privileges were questioned, from a consciousness of many of them being untenable, and all of them unjust. Another consequence of these numerous divisions of the Spanish territory was such a complication of the fiscal system, and such an obstruction in the circulation of money, that the revenue was nearly lost in collection, and insuperable obstacles were placed in the way of internal traffic. Multitudes of custom-houses and swarms of custom-house officers disgraced every provincial frontier, and interrupted the passage of merchandise in every town; and instead of recognising the first great object in fiscal legislation — namely, to leave industry as free as possible, while the burthen of taxation is principally cast upon accumulation — each petty state, in its jealousy of its neighbour, seemed to vie with the other in impeding the communication between one part of the country and another, in makin

the trader pay for the very right of exerting himself, and in leaving the idle exempt from all contribution to the necessities of the state.* No sooner did the exigencies of the government require any extraordinary supply, however justly incurred and imperatively necessary, than the states of each province prepared to resist, to the utmost of their ability, all demands of either pecuniary or military contribution, and were ready rather to fight against the government of their own country, than against a foreign enemy.

Thus, whatever were the evils and difficulties which Richelieu had to encounter in France, Spain offered her minister a much more perplexing task; none of the provinces were actually in revolt, though many were prepared for any sort of disobedience, and none but Castille was willing to contribute any thing to the support of the state. The Spanish minister, however, wanted either the courage or the wickedness to stir any portion of the king's subjects into insurrection for the purpose of reducing them to more thorough subjection; and he suffered himself to be drawn into a general war ere he had obtained complete command of the people, from which he was to obtain resources for carrying it on. Now, however, pressed forward by Richelieu, who knew that every day during which the war could be prolonged, added to the difficulties of Spain, and brought on the ultimate triumph of France, Olivarez made one last effort. Crown lands were sold in Italy; assistance was eagerly demanded of the states; new loans were required; the currency was debased for the temporary benefit to be derived from a transaction which, whatever it may be in a government, would be felonious in an individual;

* The most luminous and extraordinary view of the deplorable state of Spain at a much later period is given in a little book called *Pan y Toros*, "Bread and Bulls," which was published surreptitiously some years ago, and attributed to don Juan de Jovellanos. It was lent to me during some time, by my late talented and lamented friend, William Woodhouse, esq, but I have never been able to procure another copy, though the extraordinary vigour of the style, the mighty and overwhelming eloquence of the writer, and his deep knowledge of all the secrets of the Spanish government, made me most anxious to possess a work unequalled in its kind by any thing, except, perhaps, one or two of the letters of Junius.

and advantage being taken of some difficulties in which France, for the time, was engaged, Olivarez pushed the war in Italy with great but transitory success.

In two campaigns the duchess-regent of Savoy, trembling between the grasping ambition of Richelieu and the impatient eagerness of her husband's brothers, saw herself stripped of almost all her possessions, her people in revolt, her liberty threatened, and Spanish forces in possession of her capital. But a truce, most fatal to Spain, was concluded for two months, the enterprising count Harcourt appeared upon the scene, and all that had been gained by Olivarez was lost almost as quickly. The same fate, however, awaited the French arms in Roussillon, where the prince de Condé besieged and took the town of Salces, and one or two other places; but the younger Spinola, having been sent into that province with a considerable force, retook Salces, and completely defeated Condé, who attempted to interrupt his proceedings.

Even the inventive genius of Olivarez, who had long found resources after every apparent means of supplying funds had been exhausted, could furnish no new expedient, so long as the unjust and absurd distinctive privileges remained in force, which exempted various detached provinces of Spain from bearing a part in efforts that were necessary for the preservation of the whole. He determined, therefore, to assail those privileges; but before proceeding to extreme measures, he once more applied for support to Catalonia, as one of the richest and most capable of the various states composing the Spanish monarchy. Receiving no satisfaction, he at once ordered the Castillian troops, who had just defeated the prince de Condé, to take up their winter quarters in that province; and, commanding the Catalonians to raise and equip six thousand soldiers for the wars of Italy, he assigned them their proportion of the expenses of the state, enjoining the states to raise it, by a decree of the king.

Had the Castillian troops remained tranquil and or-

derly, overawing the Catalonians by their presence and their discipline, without enraging them by their excesses and their insolence, perhaps Olivarez might have carried through his bold design, and annihilated, one by one, the destructive privileges of the various provinces. But, on the contrary, they committed every sort of violence and injustice. Their pay greatly in arrear, and at bitter enmity with the Catalonians, they considered every act of pillage or of brutality which they committed but a just compensation to themselves, or a merited infliction on their stubborn and tumultuous neighbours. The Catalonians, stirred up to vengeance, sought retribution in chance combats, lost their dread of the Castillian troops by frequent contests with them, and were excited almost to frenzy by their violence and rapine. In the mean time, the states of Catalonia refused to obey the royal decree, and sent two deputies to remonstrate with the king and his minister. These messengers unfortunately executed their commission in an insolent and menacing tone; and Olivarez, of a haughty and inflexible character, caused them instantly to be arrested.

These tidings reached Barcelona at the moment when some fresh outrage, committed by the Castillian soldiers, had excited popular indignation to the highest pitch; and a general insurrection was the immediate consequence. The viceroy was slain upon the spot, and a negotiation was instantly entered into with France in order to procure support in rebellion. The courage of Olivarez did not fail even under this fresh misfortune: all the disposable troops in Spain were instantly directed upon Catalonia; and all the other provinces, but more especially Portugal, were ordered to arm for the suppression of the revolt.

Turbulent subjects and interested allies are always sure to take advantage of the moment of difficulty. The Portuguese, hating, with even more bitter animosity than the Catalonians, the yoke of Castille, oppressed by Vasconcellos, who ruled them under the vice-queen,

duchess of Mantua, and called upon to aid in suppressing an insurrection to which they looked with pleasure and hope, now instantly threw off the rule of Spain. A conspiracy burst forth, which had been preparing under the knowledge and advice of Richelieu for more than three years; and the duke of Braganza, a prince of no great abilities, was proclaimed king. Few great excesses were committed: Vasconcellos, indeed, was made a sacrifice to the fury of an oppressed people; but the duchess of Mantua, whose gentleness had secured her the affectionate respect even of a nation which suffered under her rule, though arrested by order of the new government, was treated with reverence and kindness. It was long before Olivarez ventured to inform the king of the rising of Portugal against his authority, as he could not conceive that even the weak and toy-like Philip IV. would bear such events with indifference. There can be no doubt also, that he gave much thought to the manner in which the communication was to be made; and at length, thoroughly acquainted with his master's character, he told him what had occurred as a joke. "The duke of Braganza has gone mad, sire," he said, "and has suffered himself to be proclaimed king of Portugal. His imprudence will be worth a confiscation of twelve millions to your majesty." The king's only reply was, "It must be looked to!" and he turned to other things as if nothing extraordinary had occurred.

To provide against the necessities of the moment, however, was far less easy than the king imagined. Castille had been already drained of troops for the purpose of repressing the insurrection in Catalonia: no sufficient force could be collected to recover Portugal, and the spirit of disaffection was spreading rapidly in other provinces. Fortunately for Olivarez, that spirit showed itself more decidedly in the districts bordering on Portugal than in any other quarter; and the small body of troops which the count-duke could send to the Portuguese frontier, though utterly inefficient in re-

ducing that country once more to submit to the Spanish government, was sufficient to restrain Andalusia from breaking out also into revolt. That province, however, was upon the very eve of insurrection, when a happy accident discovered to Olivarez this new danger. No sooner had the duke of Braganza been proclaimed king of Portugal, than, by the advice of the same wise friends who had raised him with so little difficulty to the throne of his ancestors, he sent the marquis of Ayamonte to Andalusia, which was then under the government of the duke of Medina Sidonia. His object was to divert the attention of the Spanish court from Portugal, by inciting that nobleman, whose territories were immense, to erect Andalusia into a separate state, and assume the sovereignty thereof himself. The design was bold in every respect, especially as the duke of Medina was the near relation of the count-duke Olivarez. Nevertheless, the persuasions of Ayamonte and the facility of the enterprise he proposed — while Spain, exhausted by external wars, and torn by internal contentions, seemed ready to crumble spontaneously into fragments — were sufficient to seduce the ambitious duke. Ayamonte believed his success complete, and sent off a monk to Lisbon with an account of his negotiation ; but either through treachery, or from vanity, the monk betrayed his trust, and information of the conspiracy reached the ears of Olivarez in time.

On the same day Medina Sidonia received a letter from the minister, calling him to Madrid, and news that several Castillian regiments were marching into Andalusia. For some time he hesitated as to whether he should obey or fly to Portugal ; but, at length, determined on the former course. He accordingly set out for Madrid, and proceeded at once to the house of his cousin Olivarez, by whom he was received with kindness, and assured that a complete confession of his errors would ensure him a full pardon. This he accordingly made, disclosing the whole plan which had been organised for the raising of Andalusia ; and Olivarez immediately brought him to

the presence of the king. Here, again, he repeated his former statement, acknowledged his crime, and, casting himself at the monarch's feet, besought his clemency with tears. The king is said to have wept also ; but at all events he granted the criminal noble immediate pardon. Olivarez, however, more severe than his master, exacted that the duke should remain at Madrid, while garrisons were thrown into the strong places of Andalusia ; and the revolt was stifled in its birth.

All these steps were prudent and wise on the part of the minister ; but the conspiracy of Andalusia terminated in an act which would have been absurd in any other country than Spain, and which was not very sensible even there. To wipe off all imputation from his character, the duke of Medina Sidonia was directed by Olivarez to challenge the king of Portugal, who had attempted to seduce him from his allegiance ; and although that nobleman sought to excuse himself, he was at length forced to comply. Olivarez then drew up, with his own hand, the cartel, in manner of manifesto, treating the Portuguese monarch, however, merely as duke of Braganza. Copies of this were sent to all European courts ; and on the day appointed, the duke of Medina presented himself at Valencia de Alcantara, armed at all points, and accompanied by a number of witnesses. The king of Portugal, however, of course did not appear ; and the farce, which might have proved a tragedy, ended there.

In the mean time the marquis de los Velez had taken the command of the army sent against the Catalonian rebels ; and a willing instrument of the minister's vengeance, he exercised the most barbarous cruelties as he marched on into the refractory province. The town of Tortosa was taken and sacked by his soldiers, and the people subjected to every sort of violence. Fire, massacre, and desolation marked his progress ; but, instead of inspiring crouching terror and trembling self-abandonment, his conduct roused up lion-like revenge. Hurrying on the negotiations with France, the Catalonians accepted

any terms which Richelieu chose to offer, declared themselves subject to the French crown, and pronounced the authority of Spain at an end for ever, in Catalonia. A small corps of French troops was immediately thrown forward from Roussillon, and advanced to Taragona under the command of D'Espanan, a general who had shown great skill and courage at Salces. The Catalonians, with the usual bravado of their nation, had represented their army as a thousand-fold stronger, both in numbers and discipline, than it really was; and the French officers were in consequence lamentably disappointed when they saw the militia which was to support them, and still more disappointed when they beheld that militia in face of an enemy. As a last resource against the large Spanish force under Los Velez, D'Espanan threw himself into Taragona, in opposition to the advice of Besançon, who was employed, on the part of France, in organising the Catalonians. Here he was almost immediately besieged; and, being destitute both of provisions and ammunition, was soon forced to sign a capitulation, whereby he agreed to evacuate the territory of Spain with all the troops which had entered Catalonia from France. This convention he executed, notwithstanding all remonstrances and petitions on the part of the Catalonians; and, retreating at once from Taragona to the French frontier, he abandoned the field to the enemy.

Had Olivarez now seized the favourable moment, while the Catalonians were struck with fear, and abandoned to their own resources—had he offered a general amnesty, and followed up his first successes with acts of clemency, it is probable—it is more than probable—that Catalonia would at once have been pacified, and that her dangerous privileges would in part have been sacrificed to the desire and necessity of peace. The rest of the various kingdoms which composed the monarchy, terrified by the ill success of so promising an insurrection, could have offered but little resistance to the will of the minister, and the great scheme of Olivarez might have

been executed. But the count-duke sought revenge as much as advantage ; and he was soon taught that, with great bodies of men at least, if not with individuals, hatred can become a stronger passion than fear. Continued severity only produced a continuance of resistance : the Catalonians sustained themselves till the French forces returned in greater numbers, and with more experienced commanders : the tide of success turned against the Castillians ; and Los Velez was recalled to give place to Leganez, who, on more than one occasion, had encountered the armies of France with success.

The opposition of Richelieu and Olivarez had by this time grown into personal rivalry, and had begotten personal hatred ; and, as the Spanish minister saw himself assailed by conspiracies, fomented by his rival, he determined to pursue towards his enemies the same system. He had already, on more than one occasion, lent some small aid to the duke of Orleans in his weak efforts against the French minister ; had encouraged rebellion in France wherever it had broken out ; and had shown a generous consideration for all the French exiles who sought the Spanish territory. But he now took more active measures ; and learning the discontent of the count de Soissons and the duke of Bouillon, he made them unbounded offers of assistance, and excited them by every means to light the flame of civil war in France. Their own inclinations seconded his suggestions, and the confederates of Sedan were soon in arms against Richelieu. Spain kept her promise punctually : arms, troops, and money were liberally supplied ; the battle of the Marfée was fought and won, and the fate of France trembled for a moment in the balance. The fortune or the skill of Richelieu, however, averted the impending evils. The count de Soissons was slain after the victory was gained ; the duke of Bouillon hastened to make his peace ; and the advantages obtained by Spain were few and trifling.

In Portugal, too, the plans of Olivarez were frus-

trated. The conspiracy which placed John IV. on the throne of that country had been conducted by his wife and his friends in the utmost secrecy; so that some have even supposed the prince himself was unaware of the machinations in his favour, till the way to the throne was opened at once before him. Many persons, however, of very great influence and wealth, were kept in ignorance of his views; and though they afterwards, either tacitly or actively, acknowledged his title, they nevertheless felt angry and jealous at seeing one of their own order suddenly raised to authority over them. Amongst these personages, the principal were the duke of Camina and the marquis of Villareal, both of whom were remotely descended from the ancient sovereigns of Portugal; and many other nobles shared in their feelings, and attached themselves to their views. Thus was one strong party formed in Lisbon against the new sovereign, on his very accession to the throne. Another, however, existed, comprising still greater numbers, and possessing influence of a different kind, consisting of all those who had been raised and supported by the Spanish government during its possession of Portugal. Some of these had lost their offices, and some had not; but all were attached, either by gratitude or interest, to Spain; and at the head of this party appeared the archbishop and the grand inquisitor De Castro. Such were the favourable elements that Olivarez found ready for the formation of a conspiracy, which, had it succeeded, would have cast Portugal for ever into the power of Spain; and never did any one labour more skilfully to cement, strengthen, and direct one of those great and fearful engines than did the count-duke on the present occasion. Could he have been present himself, with that peculiar combination of cautious suspicion and resolute boldness which characterised him, it is scarcely to be doubted that the plot would have succeeded; but obliged to guide it from a distance, and to trust to inferior agents, Olivarez could not prevent the secret from being divulged to

several persons unworthy of confidence, and that secret was consequently betrayed. The marquis of Ayamonte is said to have discovered and revealed it to the queen, and instant measures were taken to guard against the conspiracy and arrest the conspirators. A horrid scene of butchery then took place, and both the scaffolds and the prisons flowed with gore; a degree of remorseless cruelty being shown by the government, which sets in the fairest light the moderation displayed by the people at the time of the insurrection, and which is not to be excused by the assertion, that the conspirators would have shown themselves equally sanguinary if they had been successful.

In the mean time an attempt had been made at Naples to induce the people of that country, then a Spanish possession, to follow the example of Portugal and Catalonia. Measures had been concerted with France, and a French fleet was sent to favour the proposed insurrection; but don Francesco de Mello, who commanded there, overawed the conspirators by his firmness and decision, and not an arm was raised against his government. He even caused the prince of Sanzo, by whom the malecontents had been instigated and directed, to be carried off from Rome, and brought his head to the block. While, at home, Olivarez was struggling with increasing difficulties; in Flanders, the cardinal-infant was, with skill and courage, calm perseverance and ready promptitude, defending the territory committed to his charge, against the superior forces of France on the one side, and of Holland on the other. Unfortunately for his country, his career was destined to be but short; and having been taken ill while besieging Aire, in Artois, he left the command of the army to Francesco de Mello, who had by this time joined him, and retired to Brussels, where he died on the 9th of November, 1641.

External successes could do but little, however, to counterbalance internal difficulties, and those difficulties were now reaching their crisis. In various engagements

which took place in Catalonia, the Spanish armies were defeated by the French : the Catalonians themselves became better soldiers under the severe discipline of necessity ; and though the Spanish fleet defeated the French off Taragona, and saved that city from the enterprises of La Mothe, the general result of the campaign was decidedly unfavourable to Spain. At the same time, the French were making progress in Roussillon ; and in the year 1642 the king himself prepared to invade that small territory, with the evident intention of dissevering it from the Spanish crown. Several minor places having been taken, siege was laid to Perpignan : the people of the country were not at all unwilling to pass under the dominion of France ; and another serious misfortune threatened the ministry of Olivarez. At this time was concerted the conspiracy of Cinq Mars, which has been already spoken of fully ; and the count- duke eagerly entered into the views of the French malecontents, and promised them every assistance they demanded. The failure of the conspiracy, the arrest and execution of some of the conspirators, and the fall of Perpignan, came rapidly one upon the other, showing the fortune of Richelieu still triumphing over all the best laid schemes of his adversaries.

Such was the situation of Spain when the enemies of Olivarez, taking advantage of his misfortunes and his faults, determined to strike the blow which was to hurl him from the summit of power ; but ere we speak of the actual fall of the count- duke, it may be necessary to examine briefly the immediate causes which brought it about.

Monsieur Salvandy thinks * that Olivarez had formed one general system for establishing the absolute power of the king upon the ruins of the privileges of the various provinces, and upon the debasement of the grandees. Nothing is so seducing as that spirit of generalisation which pervades the French school of history ; and I cannot help thinking that, in the present

* *Biographie Universelle*, t. xxi p. 575.

instance, it has led the learned and talented writer, whom I have just mentioned, into a considerable error, hurrying him beyond the point where fact stops and imagination is left to pursue her way alone. I believe that all statesmen of eminence have proposed to themselves the general attainment of certain great objects, but that those who have sought such objects by a predetermined and consistent scheme are much fewer than we are apt to imagine. That Olivarez contemplated doing away the iniquitous and injurious privileges of the provinces, there can be no doubt, for every act of his ministry speaks such a determination ; but that he ever thought of rendering his sovereign absolute by the depression of the *grandees*, is not only unsupported as a supposition by any direct evidence, but is opposed to many of his proceedings. That almost all the *grandees* of Spain were inimical to him, there can be no doubt ; but their animosity might proceed from a thousand other causes, without any view on his part to the destruction of the class.

Olivarez was of a suspicious and a jealous nature ; and, from his very first entrance into power, he applied himself to shut out from any share of the royal favour every one but persons devoted to himself. This was enough at once to range the whole excluded class of *grandees* amongst his enemies. Envy, jealousy, avarice, ambition, all combined to make them look with cold dislike upon the man who exercised the whole power of the state, enjoyed all the favour of the court, and barred the path to wealth, influence, and activity, against every one but his own particular friends. Such was the first foundation of their enmity ; but, as the administration of Olivarez proceeded, other causes were added to increase their hatred. Olivarez at once struck at all the corrupt practices of former ministers. The wealth of India poured out at his feet would not have bought place, pension, or dignity from the count-duke ; none of his friends, none of his servants, was allowed to carry on a trade in the favours of the court, as had been the case in the days of the duke of Lerma. Such a man was, of

all others, the one to be detested and assailed in prosperity, and to be hated and respected in adversity. As misfortunes fell upon him, Olivarez was also forced into a number of steps, which at once increased the dislike of the grandees, and gave them greater power to injure him. Often keeping back from the ear of the king the tidings of any unfavourable event, till he found a good moment for communicating it, and always leaving him in ignorance of those negotiations which turned out unsuccessful, and those occasional errors of judgment into which every minister must at times fall; the count-duke dared not suffer any one to approach the monarch, who might be bold enough to reveal the things which he wished to keep secret. The grandees were therefore shut out from any private communication with the king; and, when they appeared at court, were treated with a degree of insolence and harshness which Castilian pride could not support. The pomp and ostentation of the minister himself added fresh matter; and the pretensions of his natural son, don Henry de Guzman, made the cup overflow. Few of the grandees appeared at the court at all; their duties in various hereditary offices were performed but negligently, and every excuse was embraced for avoiding the society of the minister.

But the most redoubtable enemy which Olivarez had yet to encounter, was one whom he could not exclude from the presence of the king — namely, the queen herself, who, with talents and virtues which rendered her well worthy of every confidence, had been kept at a distance from all public affairs, and shut out from all knowledge of what was passing, except through the uncertain channels of rumour. In order to control her communications with the court, and even to fetter her conversations with the king, the duchess of Olivarez had been appointed both principal lady of her bedchamber and governess of the infanta. A bold, harsh, and haughty woman, the duchess, by her intrusive daring, governed the queen's household, and prevented any secret influ-

ence rising up in that quarter against the authority of her husband ; while Olivarez had taken care to instil into the mind of the weak monarch, from his earliest youth, that women were unfit to meddle at all in any matters of importance. Although his own wife might have taught him the reverse, it was his common axiom — “ Men to act, monks to pray, and women to bear children ! ”

But the time had now arrived when the queen felt bound by her duty to her husband to interfere, and to rouse him at least so far as to examine with his own eyes into the state of his own affairs. It may be doubted, indeed, whether the result of the steps she now took was politic or impolitic, whether the removal of Olivarez, at the very moment that death had taken from his path the great predominant spirit of those days, and left the way to the objects for which he had always striven open and free from the shadow of Richelieu, did or did not produce evils to Spain : but no one can deny that, seeing her husband's dominions dismembered day by day,—seeing Roussillon, Portugal, Catalonia lost ; Artois almost conquered, Alsace in the hands of France, Luxemburg over-run ; Ormuz, Goa, Fernambuco, Brazil possessed by the enemy ; Naples and Sicily upon the eve of a revolt, and nothing but discontent, insurrection, and resistance in Spain, beggary in the exchequer, and desertion, disease, and scarcity in the army ; while her husband, amusing himself with idle pleasures, trusted the whole business of the state to one man, — no one can deny that, with this scene around her, it was her duty to call the king's attention to the condition of his people and his kingdom. It must also be acknowledged that she acted with the utmost gentleness in pursuit of her purpose, and strove to open the king's eyes without seeking the ruin or the blood of a minister who had done her injustice.

The queen's first step was to induce the monarch to visit the army destined to act against Catalonia ; but to bring him to such a resolution, and to support him therein

against all the opposition of Olivarez, cost her no slight exertion of skill and perseverance. In the army, she well knew that the minister's measures for keeping the king at a distance from his subjects would be more or less difficult of execution, and she trusted that Philip would there meet with men who would disclose to him the real state of the country. At the same time she doubted not that, during the absence of the king and the minister, the government of Madrid would be intrusted to her ; and that, even if no very great power thus fell into her hands, she would be able to gain much information which might prove highly beneficial at an after period. Some occasion too of serving the state could hardly fail of presenting itself during her government ; and at all events, such political discussions would be absolutely necessary between herself and her husband, after his return, as would enable her to speak more freely than she had ever found occasion to do on the condition and prospects of the country. Notwithstanding bold and even impudent opposition on the part of Olivarez, Philip persisted in the resolution which had been suggested by his wife, although every member of the council, except the marquis de Grana, imperial ambassador, who had been called to give his opinion by the express order of the king, opposed the proposed journey into Arragon. Finding that he could not prevail by direct opposition, Olivarez determined to prevent the king's expedition from proving disadvantageous to his views, by stratagem ; and leading him first to Aranjuez, and next to Molina, he amused him with hunting and a variety of other pastimes, till every thing was prepared at Saragosa. He then led the king to that city, where he kept him very nearly as far from any knowledge of the real state of the country as ever, on the pretext of the enemy being so powerful in the neighbourhood as to render it dangerous for the monarch to visit the camp. Surrounded by the creatures of the count-duke, Philip passed his days in a sort of splendid imprisonment, amusing himself in seeing his subjects play at tennis under his windows, while

his minister, with twelve carriages and 200 guards, proceeded daily to the head-quarters of the army, and acted the part of king. From the same windows, however, at night, Philip beheld the smoke and flames of the towns and villages set on fire by the enemy rising up before him ; and after a long interval of tedious inactivity, he returned to his capital, assured that the people were suffering, but ignorant of the cause.

Every thing, however, was prepared at Madrid to open the king's eyes. In that city the queen was in the meanwhile labouring with activity and wisdom, not only to prepare the means which wrought the fall of the minister, but to excite the people to support the monarchy. Suddenly emerging from the solitude to which she had previously confined herself, she mingled with the populace—she courted the nobles—she encouraged the soldiery. Her graceful suavity, her frank and generous zeal, and her confident reliance on the patriotic spirit of the people, won all hearts, opened all treasures, edged all swords in her behalf ; and before Philip returned, she had raised for his service a more considerable army, and obtained for his support a larger contribution, than Olivarez had been able to do in several years. Such actions won the confidence of her husband, and prepared his ear to listen to her representations. How far those representations went, we cannot tell ; but she certainly urged that Olivarez had been the most unfortunate minister that Spain had ever known, and that he was hated alike by the highest and the lowest classes.

Lest her own opinion should be subject to suspicion on account of the severity with which she had been treated by the minister, she called upon the monarch to question his grandees, pointing particularly to some of the connections of the minister himself, who most strongly and eagerly corroborated the queen's statement against their own relation. But it must be remembered, that the count-duke, by legitimating his natural son don Henry, had given mortal offence to his family, especially to that part thereof which had hoped to succeed to his

wealth, and therefore his own brother-in-law, the marquis de Carpio, was one of the first to bear testimony against him. The imperial ambassador added all the weight of his master's name to the party formed to ruin a man whose first great object through life had been the aggrandisement of the house of Austria. Still it would appear, that for some weeks nobody dared to accuse Olivarez openly of misconduct ; but at length, the minister, seeing that a cabal was forming against him in the royal household, and attributing a great share of it to the king's nurse, a personage of considerable importance in a Spanish court, caused her to be dismissed from the palace upon some fair pretext. At the same time, boldly remarking the king's gloom and depression, he demanded permission to retire from a station which was so full of fatigues and so void of all enjoyments. The king refused his request, merely replying, " We have both need, count, to seek diligently for remedies to our ills."

Shortly after this, tidings reached the court, which might well raise the drooping spirits of the count-duke, and renew his hopes and projects. The death of Richelieu, on the 4th of December, 1642, was announced as one of the greatest advantages which had occurred to Spain for many years ; and it is more than probable, that had Olivarez been still retained in power, he might have accomplished in the end the great designs he meditated from the first ; for Mazarin was then far inferior to him in vigour of mind, in decision of character, and in political experience. But the stream, which had long borne him forward but slowly, had now turned against him. The duchess of Mantua, whom he had carefully kept from the court after she had been suffered to return to Spain from Portugal, and whom he had treated with brutal and ungentlemanly severity and neglect, made her escape by night from the place of her exile, and suddenly presented herself in Madrid in a hired carriage, and with a suite little worthy of a princess. Notwithstanding all the minister's efforts to prevent her from telling her own history to the king, she found an op-

portunity of so doing in the apartments of the queen. Facts were then made known to Philip concerning the loss of Portugal, and the imprudent carelessness of the count-duke in regard to that kingdom, which shook all his old prepossessions in favour of Olivarez. Letters that he had never heard of, warnings that he had never received, were proved to have been sent by the duchess; and the most favourable construction that could be put upon the conduct of Olivarez was, that that minister had treated the monarch as a child.

Still, however, the king hesitated; but new disasters fell upon his armies in Catalonia and Arragon; and at length donna Anna de Guevara, his nurse, found her way into the palace; and stationing herself in a corridor through which the king passed daily at a certain hour in proceeding from his own to the queen's apartments, she cast herself at the monarch's feet when he appeared, and besought him to hear her. Philip raised her with kindness, and bade her speak her wishes; whereupon she replied, that she did not come to seek graces at his royal hand, but to render him the greatest service that the crown of Spain could receive. She had given her milk to nourish him in his infancy, she said, using the bold figures of the south, and she was now ready to spill her blood if necessary for his service. It was on this account that she came to tell him truths, which no one, who did not feel as a mother towards him, would dare to tell. She then went on to detail, in powerful language, all the misfortunes which overwhelmed Spain; and, in the end, declared that these were the punishments with which God had visited him, for leaving entirely to another the discharge of those duties which Heaven had imposed upon him for the benefit of the country. She besought him then to issue from the state of tutelage in which he was kept, and not to provoke farther the anger of the Almighty by suffering his country to be lost, his subjects maltreated, and the prince, his son, perhaps to be driven ultimately into exile, with scarcely the fortune of a private gentleman.

The king listened with attention, and replying, "You have spoken truth," led the way into the queen's apartments, where the conversation was prolonged for several hours. A number of the queen's women were present at the latter part of the conference; and the wife of Henry de Gusman, who was in the palace, soon gained information of the whole proceedings. The news also spread to other quarters; and the effect was visible both in the demeanour of the minister and his son, who appeared from that moment to be plunged into grief and despondency, and in the conduct of the other nobles who took care to pour their accusations of the count-duke into the now open ear of the king. The imperial ambassador, about the same time, received a letter from the emperor, which he was directed to present to Philip; and which, after stating in plain terms the terrible situation of the house of Austria, suggested distinctly the dismissal of the count-duke.

A number of other circumstances combined to drive the monarch to try other means than those which had hitherto guided him; and in order that he might know the real state of his army and his treasury, he sent notes to the councils of war and of finance, demanding precise information regarding the actual numbers of the forces in Catalonia, and the funds for continuing the war. The reply from the first of these was, that the Catalonian army had been reduced by various losses to 5000 men; and from the second, that, of 6,000,000, which had been required, only 1,000,000 was to be obtained. This news disturbed even the statue-like repose of the king's habitual demeanour, and the fall of Olivarez was resolved.

On the 15th of January, 1643, Philip with his own hand wrote to his minister, forbidding him to interfere farther in affairs of state, and commanding him to retire to his country house, at the distance of a few leagues from Madrid. The minister, who had long perceived that his favour was shaken, was not so much astonished or depressed as his family, and bore his re-

verse with fortitude and dignity. His wife, who was absent at the time, returned in haste to the capital, and throwing herself at the feet of the king and of the queen, besought their clemency and forbearance in the most abject terms. In the meantime don Louis de Haro, nephew of Olivarez, who had no slight cause of dislike towards his uncle, found means to insinuate himself into the good graces of the king; but he employed his opportunity to no evil purpose, beseeching the monarch, on the contrary, to suffer the retreat of the disgraced minister to take place with as few signs of displeasure as possible. And thus, during several days after the minister had received his dismissal, he remained in the palace, transacted business occasionally with the king and the council, while in secret his preparations were made for quitting the court. The monarch also granted him permission to destroy all such papers relating to his own conduct as he thought fit; and after lingering as long as he could, in hopes that a change might take place in his favour, Olivarez made up his mind to retire. The unrestrained animosity of the people, however, he had reason to believe, might inflict insult, if not injury, upon him as he passed through the town; and he accordingly sent his own equipages from the front of the building, while a hired carriage conveyed him with two priests from another door. His apprehensions were not unfounded, and his precaution wise; his carriages were attacked, his attendants ill-treated, and it was only by showing the mob that the minister himself was not present that they were suffered to proceed. That he had quitted the palace, however, was soon known through the town, and a public rejoicing took place as if a victory had been gained. The bakers gave away their bread, the fruiterers distributed their fruit without payment; and the short-sighted but enthusiastic populace gave way to as much joy as if peace and prosperity could not fail of being instantly restored, thus preparing disappointment for themselves, and the bitter task of undeceiving them for the minister who was to follow.

No such rejoicings took place in the court. Favourable changes were slow in making their appearance; Philip, unaccustomed to business, and knowing his own incompetence, became both wearied and alarmed under the weight that he had suddenly taken upon himself. Olivarez had made no statesmen, for his suspicions had kept men of talent from public employments, and his unwearied application had supplied the place of many inferior officers. Don Louis de Haro, though possessed of considerable abilities, was as yet inexperienced; and the time very speedily came, when Philip began to regret his former minister, and to think of recalling him to power. It unfortunately happened, however, that just at the moment when prudence might have secured his return, Olivarez, unwisely, published a vindication of his own conduct, which, by its violent language, gave so much offence to the queen, and every other influential person at the court, that, instead of once more calling him to his councils, Philip sent him a command to quit the vicinity of Madrid, and remain at Toro, in the kingdom of Leon. Olivarez obeyed; but disappointment preyed upon his health, and, we are even told, injured his mental faculties. His strength gradually failed; and after lingering for some time, he died in 1645.

The count-duke Olivarez possessed many of the qualities of a great statesman, but, at the same time, many of the faults of a weak man. His views were vast, and in general not inaccurate in their principal features, though their extent often prevented that correct calculation of details which, previously made, would have prevented many of his enterprises from being undertaken, and would have secured success to many others. He had great powers of application, considerable skill in discovering the schemes of others, and much diplomatic ability. His negotiations were almost always more successful than his arms; but in neither did fortune favour him, or success attend him as with Richelieu. On the other hand, Olivarez was suspicious,

inflexible, and despotic. He employed but few persons, and those in few matters of importance ; rather choosing to bear the whole labour of administration, than to share his authority, communicate his schemes, or endanger his favour.

There was a curious difference between the great judgment with which Olivarez saw into the characters and designs of those opposed to him, and the total want of discrimination which appeared in his selection of persons for his own service. Thus he was always individually prepared to encounter the most artful political wiles of his adversaries ; but he had no person attached to him who was worthy of being intrusted with any negotiation of importance. No famous general owed his rise to Olivarez ; no statesman of any abilities issued from his school.

The defects of national character often affected the shrewdness of the minister. His ideas of the power and grandeur of Spain, and his contempt for her opponents, particularly the Portuguese, made him lose many valuable opportunities, and neglect many a wise precaution. In regard to the latter, indeed, the warnings that he received and treated with indifference afford matter for the most serious charge that can be made against his abilities as a statesman. His inflexibility was part of his character as a man which often made him appear cruel, but which sometimes assumed the appearance and supplied the place of a virtue. He maintained great pomp and state, though far less than the duke of Lerma ; but, at the same time, his integrity and disinterestedness were very great. All the large revenues which his various offices produced, all his own income, and part even of the principal of his private fortune, he spent either in maintaining his own station at the court, or in aiding the state in moments of difficulty. Bribery was unheard of during his administration ; and when he quitted office, he was poorer than when he first took the reins of government. The same disinterested spirit pervaded all his actions. He sought no strong places

as a retreat in case of danger ; he obtained no provinces to govern, where he might have opposed or controlled the will of his sovereign, on the occurrence of disgrace. He coveted power, he was avaricious, and jealous of authority ; he kept a weak prince in ignorance of affairs which he was incompetent to direct and only likely to derange ; but whatever were the errors and faults of the count-duke, his sole object seems to have been the good of his sovereign, his first desire to aggrandise his master.

In person, we are told, Olivarez was plain, and somewhat ill-proportioned ; and in manners grave, except when, for the purpose of concealing misfortunes, he affected a gaiety which he did not feel. His integrity, his talents, and his devotion to his monarch deserved better fortunes ; and it is probable that, at any other period, his ministry would have been one of the most successful that Spain had ever seen. One who knew him as a youth (Cespedes), describes him as of strong judgment, grave, studious, showing a disposition for arms, active and prompt in affairs, ready and resolute. One thing at least is certain,—had the schemes of Olivarez only so far succeeded as related to the internal policy of Spain, a great part of the evils, the prejudices, the fetters, in short, of all kinds, which have chained her down, and kept her to one spot, while all the rest of the world has advanced, would have been dissolved at once.

JULIUS CARDINAL MAZARIN.

BORN 1602, DIED 1661.

MUCH obscurity hangs over the early life of Julius Mazarin, and the place of his birth is by some said to have been Piscina in the Abruzzi, while some contend that he first saw light in Rome itself. All agree, however, that he was born on the 14th of July, 1602, and that his early education was conducted at Rome. Many writers assert that his parents were in very poor circumstances, and exercising handicraft employments; while others represent them as in affluence, allied to the noblest families in Rome, and descended from one of the most ancient races of Sicily. It is probable that the family of Mazarin was poor, for it is proved that he had considerable difficulty in forcing his way forward; and it is also likely that his relations held no very distinguished situation, as we find that he carefully avoided allusions to his early years; but it seems equally clear that they were noble by birth and respectable in station, as at his outset in life he was employed in situations where such advantages were then considered indispensable. The first studies of Mazarin were pursued under the instruction of the Jesuits at Rome; and he is said to have distinguished himself highly at the college of those learned men. Having attracted the attention of Jerome Colonna, afterwards cardinal Colonna, he accompanied that personage at an early age to the university of Alcalá, and continued his studies in Spain for a short time with great distinction. But, either in consequence of some disputes with the Spaniards, or of his own eagerness to advance his fortunes in a more extended sphere, he quitted that country before he was

twenty years of age, and entered the ecclesiastical army under Torquato Conti. He afterwards served for some time with the marquis de Bagni in the Valteline as captain of infantry, and shared in the disgraceful flight of that officer before the French troops under Cœuvres. As a soldier he never obtained any distinction; and his military life is only remarkable, as showing the same extraordinary difference between his original profession and his subsequent pursuits which is to be found in the case of Richelieu.

As a negotiator, however, he early distinguished himself, — taking advantage of men's weaknesses to discover the secrets of their hearts by the most opposite means. Thus, even while in the Valteline, he purposely provoked the duke of Feria to betray, in a fit of passion, his intention of opposing the papal influence at the court of Spain; while afterwards, in dealing with the maréchal d'Estrées, he gaiped the same object by suppleness and insinuating gentleness. To the family of Bagni, Mazarin now attached himself; and, in 1628, he accompanied the cardinal de Bagni to France, whither that prelate was sent as nuncio, to replace Spada, whose violence and freedom of speech had given constant offence to the imperious minister of Louis XIII.* To that monarch, and to the cardinal de Richelieu, Mazarin was now formally introduced; and from that moment, without detaching himself at once from the papal court, he did all that he could to gain the favour of France, and attract the notice of the French minister. His first efforts appeared in the disputes, which afterwards produced a long-continued war, concerning the succession to the duchy of Mantua. To prevent actual hostilities, the pope despatched the cardinal Sachetti to Turin, to negotiate with the duke of Savoy in regard to the claims of the latter upon Montferrat. Mazarin, who

* The cardinal de Retz declares that Bagni, the general, informed him that Mazarin, while with the army in the Valteline, was considered as nothing but a sharper, and yet to this very family of Bagni did he owe his first support. De Retz, however, is not to be relied upon when speaking of his enemy Mazarin.

was then studying jurisprudence, set out in company with Sachetti, on the very day after he had taken his degree of doctor of laws.

The cardinal did not long remain at Turin; but, on his return to Rome, Mazarin was left behind with the title of internuncio, and all his endeavours were directed to persuade the Spanish and imperial courts to abandon their attack upon the duke of Mantua, and conclude a peace with that prince upon honourable terms. But these endeavours were ineffectual, and arms were destined to decide the fortune of the house of Nevers. Richelieu, however, who loved subserviency, did not fail to remark, and in the end to recompense, the leaning of Mazarin to the part of France; and in the course of a mission which the Italian undertook, at the instigation of the duke of Savoy, for the purpose of staying the march of the French army into Piedmont, the cardinal minister had a long interview with the young Roman, and conceived the highest opinion of his talents for diplomacy.

If Richelieu, however, esteemed and praised Mazarin, there is little doubt that the Italian suffered himself to be gained over entirely to the interests of France; and that, while he kept up the appearance of being merely the servant of the pope, he was busily engaged in forwarding the views of Richelieu, or in obtaining for him such information as might guide his operations to a successful result. During the war which now took place in Savoy, Mazarin was constantly employed; ever giving himself out as the eager promoter of peace, and ever favouring the cause of France against Spain and the empire. He was now brought several times into contact with Richelieu and the king of France, and always found means to raise himself in their favour. At length, though in general hostilities languished on both sides, and Richelieu suffered the territories of Mantua to be wrested from the duke, the war was carried on more vigorously in the Montferrat. Cassal was besieged by Spinola and defended by Thoiras with equal

skill ; but in the end the garrison became incapable of protracting the defence both of the town and the citadel, on account of the sickness of the troops and the scarcity of provisions.

Mazarin, being informed of the state of the case, contrived to negotiate a suspension of arms between the two generals ; and Thoiras gave up the city to Spinola, but merely as a deposit to be returned in case a French army could relieve the citadel within a certain period. In the meantime, the French found means to introduce a certain quantity of provisions into the citadel ; and Mazarin himself, while conducting the negotiation, furnished the governor with several sums of money, which was as much wanting as any other supply. A treaty, however, was concluded at Ratisbon, during the continuance of this truce, by which it was stipulated that, within a fixed time, the whole Montferrat should be given up, by the Spaniards, to the duke of Mantua. Previous to the publication of the treaty in Italy, a French force had been collected for the relief of Cassal, Spinola had fallen ill and retired from the Spanish camp, and the army and generals he had left behind were not competent to offer a vigorous resistance. Under these circumstances, the French generals refused to acknowledge the treaty of Ratisbon ; and, declaring that its provisions would force the armies to keep the field all the winter, demanded that Cassal should be given up to the duke of Mantua at once. To this Mazarin obtained the consent of the Spanish general ; but the facility with which one exaction was permitted induced the French to require more ; and Mazarin was sent back in order to procure the instant evacuation of all the principal towns held by the Spaniards in the Montferrat. A decided refusal, however, was now given ; and marshal Schomberg, with his fellow commanders, advanced to attack the Spanish lines.* Mazarin, in the meanwhile, was urging the Spaniards, with all the plausible eloquence of which he was master, to consent to the terms

proposed, and he at length succeeded. But by this time the French were within half a mile of the Spanish lines, Piccolomini had thrown forward a body of musketeers to annoy Schomberg in his advance, and the cannon had already opened their fire from the Spanish position. Mazarin, borrowing a swift horse, however, galloped as fast as he could towards the advancing army, waving his hat, and exclaiming, "Halt! halt!" and, though he ran considerable risk from the fire of both parties, he reached marshal Schomberg in safety. The French army was now halted; and the generals of both nations having met, the terms were agreed upon, and were ultimately executed on the part of the Spaniards with good faith, on the part of the French with treacherous delay.

The partiality of Mazarin to the interests of France was well known to that power, but was as yet concealed from her enemies; and Richelieu, consequently, lost no opportunity of negotiating with the princes of Italy through the mediation of the Roman diplomatist. The next transaction of any import in which he was engaged, regarded the cession of Pignerol to France* by the duke of Savoy; and, in respect to this business, he conducted the negotiations so skilfully as to persuade the duke not only to yield one of his most important fortresses with scarcely an effort to retain it, but, after having placed himself at the mercy of France, to deceive, with the utmost duplicity, the Spaniards from whom he had hitherto derived support. To such services Richelieu was never insensible, and he now bent all his efforts to induce the pope to name Mazarin nuncio at the court of France. He met with more difficulties, however, than he expected; or, at least, the proceedings of the sovereign pontiff were slower than he desired.

Though employed at the period solely as a papal minister, Mazarin had not yet decided upon entering

* The *Biographie Universelle* attributes the whole scheme of concealing a part of the garrison in Pignerol to Mazarin. The events connected therewith have been already related in the Life of Richelieu; but I find no proof that Mazarin had any direct part in the plot or its execution.

into the ecclesiastical state ; but, shortly after the affair of Pignerol, the hopes of support at the pontifical court, held out to him by France and the favour of the pope himself, induced him to resign the sword, and put on the surplice. One of the rich canonicates of the Lateran was his first reward ; and, not long afterwards, he was appointed vice-legate to Avignon. The post of nuncio in France, however, was that which he most earnestly desired ; and to obtain it he employed all the resources of his keen and intriguing mind. Richelieu seconded his efforts powerfully ; but the Spaniards, who had by this time learned to suspect the Roman minister, opposed his views. Favoured by the pontiff himself, Mazarin soon saw success approaching ; but the Spanish ambassador, who at length perceived that further opposition was useless, as it was already determined that the aspiring Italian should be sent as nuncio extraordinary to Paris, endeavoured, in the next place, to insure that the object intrusted to Mazarin's negotiation should be of such a nature as either to embroil him with Richelieu if he pressed it severely, or disgrace him with the pope if he neglected to enforce it. The subject fixed upon was the quarrel between France and Lorraine ; but Mazarin was too shrewd to engage himself in difficulties ; and though he affected to use every means to induce Richelieu to restore the duke to his territories, yet his applications were fruitless, and they certainly were not sincere.

While he remained at Paris, the first decided rupture took place between France and Spain, on account of the attack made by the latter power upon the archbishopric of Trèves ; and, under these circumstances, Mary of Medicis, the exiled mother of the French king, without influence, without power, without even a party in France, took upon herself the mighty task of reconciling the two crowns. The personage on whom she fixed as a mediator was no other than Mazarin ; and to him she wrote, recommending the promotion of a general pacification. She also addressed an epistle to the king her son, once more en-

deavouring to touch his heart on her own account, and entrusted the letter to the care of Mazarin. But the king paid no attention to her entreaties, and Mazarin played into the hand of her most bitter adversary. The very reply that he thought fit to send was dated from the cardinal's house at Ruel ; and all his actions showed that Mazarin had given himself up to the sole guidance of Richelieu. During a severe fit of illness which he now suffered, the cardinal minister showed him more real and tender kindness than, perhaps, he ever displayed to any other human being ; and Mazarin resumed his official duties with the certainty that no efforts would be spared by France to raise him to a seat in the conclave.

In the meanwhile his late conduct had fully confirmed the suspicions of the Spanish court ; and, by representations and remonstrances, it forced the pontiff to recall Mazarin to his station as vice-legate at Avignon. He was suffered not long after to return to Rome ; but there new difficulties arose, and obstructed his advance, springing from the very steps which he had taken to facilitate his progress. In order to gratify the cardinal-nephew, Antonio Barberini, Mazarin had obtained from Richelieu that the French ambassador, Noailles, should be recalled, and that the *maréchal d'Estrées* should be sent to Rome in his place. But the bluff and hasty manners of the latter displeased the pontiff as much as Noailles had displeased his nephew, and every means were used to cause the removal of D'Estrées.

Richelieu, however, remained firm ; and also, in regard to the invasion of Parma, showed a degree of resolution which surprised the Roman court. Mazarin it was who suffered from the French minister's determined conduct ; and the cardinal's hat, which Richelieu eagerly demanded for him, was withheld, without any plausible excuse. New quarrels ensued between D'Estrées and the Roman court ; and one of his attendants was murdered, upon which Scotti was sent as nuncio to Paris. Richelieu, however, refused to receive him in that quality, or to treat farther with

Rome till his creature was raised to the conclave, and other personal demands granted. The pope continued obstinate, and Scotti endeavoured to intimidate Richelieu; but an assembly of the clergy of France, called by the minister, spoke so boldly of the encroachments of the Roman see, and pointed so distinctly to the means of checking its exactions, that the pontiff began to fear the consequences, and moderated his tone towards the *maréchal d'Estrées*.

Richelieu, on his side, abandoned part of his demands, but still required the hat for Mazarin; and some new events occurred in the course of 1640, which increased his obligations towards the Roman statesman, and caused him to press his request more eagerly. The siege of Turin having taken place*, count Harcourt hastened to its relief; but Richelieu, who not only desired to deliver the city, but to gain the princes of Savoy to his own party, sent for Mazarin, and directed him, as ambassador from the king of France, to endeavour to conclude a truce by which not only the Piedmontese capital might be relieved, but prince Thomas, as well as his brother, be brought over to the French interests. The first of these objects had been accomplished, by the gallantry and skill of count Harcourt, before Mazarin arrived: but the latter part of the negotiation he carried through with consummate policy; and both planned and executed the arrest of the duchess of Savoy's most faithful counsellor, count Philip d'Aglié, who had always opposed the ambitious and exacting views of France.

The act was base, treacherous, and a direct violation of the rights of nations; but it was serviceable and gratifying to Richelieu; and, in the course of the following year, the name of Mazarin appeared in the papal list of promotions to the conclave. He had remained in France during the interval, following the court and occupying various posts of minor importance. On the march to Perpignan, he accompanied the minister; and at Valence was met by the nuncio bearing the hat from the

* See the Life of Richelieu.

sovereign pontiff.* It was bestowed on him, with the usual ceremonies, by the hands of the king himself; and an Italian regiment, which served with credit in the expedition to Roussillon, was distinguished by his name. During that very expedition, however, Mazarin saw all the hopes which he had conceived from the favour of Richelieu, tremble on the eve of falling with the fortunes of the minister himself. The conspiracy of Cinq Mars, the last and most dangerous of all those that threatened the cardinal de Richelieu, now reached the point at which it was to be executed or discovered. The minister underwent the first severe attack of an illness which was afterwards to prove mortal, and both his friends and his enemies believed him to be dying; but that which, used skilfully against him, might have proved his destruction, in the unskilful hands of his opponents saved him from ruin. Cinq Mars and his associates, supposing that his days were numbered, paused in their course to let fate spare them the pain and danger of the deed. Time was given for Richelieu to receive the evidence of their treason; and he recovered sufficiently to complete and to witness their fall. One of the most, and one of the least, culpable of the conspirators, forfeited life upon the scaffold. The blood of the king's brother was spared, while his honour was sacrificed; and the duke of Bouillon's pardon was purchased by the resignation of his principality of Sedan. As Richelieu, from an abscess in the arm, could not sign the compact which secured immunity to the duke and Sedan to France, he deputed Mazarin to draw up the paper, and afterwards sent him to receive the surrender of the principality. In the tyrannical exactions which Richelieu, during the few remaining months of his life, practised upon the king, in order probably to punish his participation in the conspiracy of Cinq Mars, Mazarin wisely refrained from appearing; but when the monarch's anger burst forth against Chavigny, whose bold mind would scarcely bend to the ceremonial respect due to the station

* February, 1642.

of a sovereign whom he saw his principal trample on daily with impunity, Mazarin stepped forward to plead the cause of the secretary; and, by rendering himself the protector of his rival, rendered himself his superior.

At length the death of Richelieu left vacant the office of prime minister, and Mazarin immediately began to exercise the functions, if not to bear the title, of that officer. Chavigny was personally disliked by the king; de Noyers was not agreeable to him; and though he had promised Richelieu to continue in place the ministry which that extraordinary man had formed, he did not feel himself at all bound to advance either of the two secretaries to the vacant post. Some passages in the letters of Mazarin seem to imply, that to the recommendation of Richelieu himself he owed the distinction, which he immediately enjoyed upon the great statesman's decease; but it is more probable that the real foundation of his favour was his own supple and courtierlike demeanour, his political sagacity, and persevering cunning.

The inclination of the king towards Mazarin did not in the least diminish after the death of Richelieu; and, as one of the strongest proofs of its continuance, the monarch appointed him godfather to his eldest son, afterwards famous as Louis XIV. The illness and approaching death of Louis XIII., however, gave him some cause for apprehension; and he took care to guard as far as possible against contingencies, first by inducing the king to place his name second in the council of regency, which the monarch appointed previous to his death; and, secondly, by obtaining from him an order, according to the tenor of which the regent was to dispose of all ecclesiastical offices and dignities by the advice of Mazarin alone. All these precautions, however, were vain.

Mazarin did not, indeed, stand ill with the queen, but Potier, bishop of Beauvais, occupied a much higher station in her favour; and scarcely was the king dead when Anne of Austria proceeded to the parliament and annulled the will of her husband, which she had pro-

mised most solemnly to observe. She was now left by the decree of the parliament to name her own council of regency, and to follow its advice or not, as she thought fit; and she immediately raised the bishop of Beauvais to the high office of prime minister. If few women were less qualified than Anne of Austria to govern a turbulent and dissatisfied people like the French, no man was ever more unfit to exercise the functions of minister in moments of difficulty than the prelate whom she now selected. The witty and factious cardinal de Retz, addressing a third person, calls him "more idiot than all the idiots of your acquaintance;" and declares that his first act was to propose to the people of Holland to abandon their religion and become papists. At all events, it is sufficiently evident that he was unequal to the station which he occupied; and the queen herself soon began to feel that the dignity of the regent suffered from the folly of her minister.

It was very difficult, however, at that moment to supply his place, inasmuch as three parties existed at the court, each of them powerful, and two of them dangerous. The first consisted of the friends, supporters, and confidential advisers of the late cardinal de Richelieu; the second, of the persons whom he had banished or cast into prison, and who, now recalled to Paris, made their appearance once more on the political stage, with ideas far behind the point to which the genius of Richelieu had hurried forward the age; the third contained a mixed party, gathered, like the last, from Richelieu's enemies, but comprising all those whom the powers of his mind or the fears of his vengeance had restrained from actual attempts to overthrow his government. To this last body were added all the factious and turbulent of Paris; all those who, amidst the population of a great capital, find their real or putative talents overlooked; all those who are dissatisfied with the slow and regular paths to dignity and emolument; all those who are discontented with every thing they do not understand; and those who are so infamous, so un-

principled, or so stupid as to have no hopes nor prospects, except in the destruction of that civil order, which guards the peaceable from the fangs of the unruly.

However, as the incapacity of the bishop of Beauvais became daily more apparent, and even he himself, though jealous of all who were likely to succeed him in office, felt his weak mind staggering under the burden of the state, it was determined to call Mazarin more immediately to the councils of the queen. The cardinal had kept himself prepared to return to Italy on the least appearance of danger, his horses and carriages were even held ready; and he himself made perhaps too great a parade of his desire of retiring from the French court, to convince any one of his sincerity. At length, however, the bishop of Beauvais, on pretence of visiting his diocese, quitted Paris, and Mazarin received notice that the queen required his assistance.

Hitherto all had been tranquil, though all had been weak. The queen had given every thing to those who asked her, till monsieur de la Feuillade declared that the French language had reduced itself to five little words, "*The queen is so good!*" The regent herself had exhibited plentiful foibles; and her favourite for the time, the duke of Beaufort, who summed the airs, without possessing the privileges, of a lover, ruled all things, and distributed all gifts. The queen had sense enough to perceive that such a state could not exist much longer; and her choice of Mazarin was perhaps as wise as any other she could have formed. Chavigny was firmer, more enlightened, and more vigorous, resembling Richelieu in more points than did Mazarin. But the day of Richelieu had gone by: he himself had exhausted his own influence, had worked out the mine that he had discovered, and had brought about a state to which the very government that had produced it was no longer applicable. It is possible that the great mind of Richelieu, his gigantic power, and the terrors of his name, might have enabled him, if he had lived, to have carried on his system longer than he did; but no other man could do it

after he was gone ; and Mazarin, convinced that such was the case, determined to modify the policy of the minister he followed, in a manner to which it is probable the character of Chavigny would not have submitted.

At his very first outset, however, he was destined to encounter that factious opposition which pursued him through a great part of his ministry. The duke of Beaufort had been one of the persons who had suffered from either the policy or the enmity of Richelieu ; and the sight of a creature of that minister raised to the most important office in the state was insufferable to the son of Vendôme. He opposed, he protested, he caballed, and, with five or six other noblemen of inferior rank, gave himself and his plans such airs of consequence, that they acquired the name of the *Importants*, and afforded Mazarin a pretext for arresting the duke*, and driving the rest from Paris. Many persons have contended that the duke had seriously planned the imprisonment or meditated the death of the minister ; and Mazarin during a whole day either felt great alarm, or affected the appearance thereof with much address. In arresting the duke of Beaufort, however, Mazarin did not alone accomplish an act necessary to his own security, but he also satisfied the enmity of the prince of Condé, who had personal causes of dislike towards the rash, weak duke ; and he gratified the duke of Orleans, who was for a time bound in the strictest ties of friendship to the prince.

This step being securely planted, another followed in the same course ; the bishop of Beauvais was ordered to remain in his diocese, and a number of other prelates, who had offended both Mazarin and Condé, were directed to retire from Paris. About the same time, also, the cardinal induced the queen to remove from the Louvre to the palace of the late minister Richelieu, which was thenceforward called the Palais Royal, and obtained for himself therein a suite

* September, 1643.

of rooms which possessed an outlet to the *rue des Bons Enfants*, as well as by the great gates to the *rue St. Honoré*.

Mazarin was now all-powerful in the mind of the queen; and, notwithstanding every effort of faction, he remained in authority till the end of his life, ruling France either from Paris, the provinces, or a foreign country, with difficulty, it is true, but not without success. The arrest of the duke of Beaufort, who, a few months before, had appeared omnipotent at the court, gave immense advantages to the minister; and this one act of vigour, together with the impetus which Richelieu had given to the government up to the last hour of his life, carried the cardinal calmly through the first four years of the regency. He himself affected extreme moderation and great humility; and while with keen penetration he watched all the manœuvres of the courtiers, and took care to frustrate, without encountering, every attempt to injure him, he attached multitudes to his interests by his mildness, his liberality, and his placability. These qualities, however, without some sterner virtues, are those which too often make a minister despised; but although Mazarin's character wanted the boldness, and perhaps the firmness, which are necessary to afford for love the steadfast foundation of respect, yet the success of his measures, and the constant triumph of the French armies under his ministry, shielded him during those four years from that light and laughing scorn with which the inhabitants of Paris are too apt to treat all those who do not trample on their necks. To carry on the war with vigour, Mazarin had to overcome some opposition in the council, many members of which, favoured it is supposed by the queen herself, were desirous of concluding a peace with the family from which she sprung. The cardinal, however, prevailed; and renewing the treaty which had lately expired with Holland, he gave the command of the army, destined to act in concert with the Dutch fleet, to the inconstant duke of Orleans, who made himself master of Gravelines, after a tedious siege. About the same time, however, general Rantzau was defeated with very severe loss, and Freiburg taken; but

the exploits of Condé and Turenne soon made ample compensation ; and the French victory at Freiburg, with the capture of Philipsburg, Spires, Worms, and Mayence, effaced all memory of the foregoing disasters.

The employment of the most influential persons in the state at a distance from the capital greatly tended to confirm the power of Mazarin ; but the parliament of Paris, so often trampled on by Richelieu, began to raise its head against the more feeble rule of his successor. Mazarin, at first, far from showing any disposition to oppose that body, did all that circumstances permitted to court its favour, causing the queen to declare, upon all occasions, that she wished to rule by its advice alone. An opportunity soon presented itself, however, for the parliament to show some slight contempt for the royal authority : the court took one vigorous measure, which was speedily disavowed, and the parliament pursued its course but the more boldly. Mutual concessions quelled the dispute ; but the body of the law never forgot the triumph it had gained, and from that moment it proceeded more eagerly in its exactions. The disposition of the parliament to oppose the court now became so apparent, that in many cases, where small and indirect taxes were levied in order to carry on the growing expenses of the war, the individuals on whom the burden fell appealed to the parliament, and thus both embarrassed the minister and decreased the revenue. Many of these taxes were of old establishment, and had been frequently confirmed ; but still the parliament, feeling its importance increased both with the court and the people, by the difficulties it could throw in the way of the minister, persisted in entertaining the appeals of all kinds that were made to it, and deliberated with solemn pomp on trifles naturally removed from its cognisance. In fact, without precisely perceiving what was wanting to insure the freedom of the subject, and to afford that best security for the stability of the throne, the parliaments of Paris were struggling — and had been struggling during many ages

— for the privileges of a legislative assembly, though their efforts were generally rendered pitiful, from not having a distinct and comprehensive purpose, and of course became ineffectual, because their own rights to legislate — they not being the representatives of the people — had no better foundation than those of the king whom they opposed.

Not long after his accession to power under the regency, Mazarin had to conduct three difficult negotiations, in two of which he was very successful ; and, indeed, his mind was much better adapted to the calm though intricate paths of diplomatic intrigue, than to the rough and dangerous ways through which he was forced to advance in his internal government of the country. His first attempt, however, was unsuccessful. The death of Urban VIII. having left the chair of St. Peter vacant in the middle of the year 1644, Mazarin strained every nerve to cause the election of a new pope favourable to the interests of France. But the reign of Urban had been long ; and neither Mazarin himself, nor the Barberinis, who were intrusted with the interests of France, were experienced in the intrigues of the conclave. In spite of all Mazarin's efforts, by the bad management of the cardinal Antonio Barberini, Innocent X., who had formerly been nuncio in Spain, was elected, and the French candidate was excluded. Some accused the Barberinis of having betrayed the interests of France : but the persecution which they underwent during the first years of Innocent's government exculpated them in the eyes of Mazarin ; and during their exile from the court of Rome they were received in France with a degree of tenderness which did honour to the heart of the minister. Previous to the death of the former pope, however, Mazarin had accomplished the pacification of central Italy, by negotiating a treaty between Urban and the duke of Parma ; and in the following year, by restoring peace between the Danes and the Swedes, he left the armies of the latter free to act once more against the house of Austria. To the great object

of diminishing the power of that family Mazarin devoted his chief attention ; and though incapable of conceiving or executing the mighty schemes which had been formed by his predecessor, he pursued this part of Richelieu's designs with skill, perseverance, and courage.

In the mean time the parliament did not fail to continue the investigation of all complaints in regard to taxes affecting the citizens of Paris ; and several of the leading members were accused of exciting the people to make the appeals which were afterwards to be judged by themselves. Mazarin now perceived that the government could not be carried on without some vigorous measure to check the constant interference of the parliament ; accordingly he issued an order of council banishing the four most factious members of that body from Paris, and putting one of them, the president Barillon, under strict arrest. The parliament remonstrated, and despatched a deputation to petition the queen to restore the officers suspended to the exercise of their functions. The queen, however, and her council remained firm ; and as a means of forcing her to yield, the various courts of which the parliament was composed assembled almost daily, to consider new remonstrances, thereby totally interrupting the dispensation of justice to which they were bound by their offices. On this the court yielded to a certain point, and suffered the three exiled members to return ; but in regard to the president Barillon no lenity was shown ; and various efforts to obtain his release having proved ineffectual, he was conducted a prisoner to Pignerol.

All seemed quiet now for a certain time ; but the state was still at a very great expense ; immense armies continually in the field, drained the exchequer ; and the infamous speculation exercised in the collection of the revenue left the country always in a state of exigence. The impetus given to the affairs of the government by the energy of Richelieu gradually ceased. In vain Turenne and Condé carried on the war with the most triumphant success ; in vain the Swedes recovered their superiority

over the armies of Austria ; in vain more than sixteen fortified cities were captured in less than a year by the French generals ; the revenue was not equal to the expenses of the state ; and the country suffered, though the territories of which it consisted were augmented.

It would be tedious to investigate all the causes which were now hurrying France on towards a civil war : the immediate pretext for the first open rupture between the cardinal and the parliament, more absolutely demands examination in this place. Amongst other means of recruiting the finances of the country, a tax, according to a certain tariff, had been laid upon the entrance of all goods into Paris. This most burdensome and distressing of all kinds of imposition had been sanctioned by the court of aides, and had been in operation nearly a year, when, on the repeated remonstrances of the people, the parliament interfered as a body, and threatened to forbid its longer continuance. The court contended that it was not within the cognisance of the parliament, but merely of the court of aides ; and Mazarin, who knew nothing of the laws and customs of the French people, and even spoke the language at that time with a strong foreign accent, drew great ridicule upon himself by the terms in which he supported the tariff in a conversation with deputies from the body of magistrates. Ridicule is in France one of the most dangerous arms that can be employed against a minister ; and Mazarin soon found that the edict and tariff would ere long be annulled by a decree of the parliament. To spare the royal authority from insult under these circumstances, he himself suppressed the tariff, but soon after presented a variety of other edicts more burdensome than the former. .

It is said, indeed, that Mazarin himself had no part in devising these measures ; and whatever blame is attached to them is often cast upon Emery, the superintendent of finance. As prime minister, however, and the queen's favourite, the odium at the time fell upon the cardinal, which was not decreased by his having added to his other employments that of superintendent

of the young king's education. The parliament refused to verify the edicts ; but a declaration for the establishment of a chamber of domaines, which had been verified two or three years before, but had been suspended as too onerous to the people, was now brought forward, and as the parliament could not deny its own act, was immediately put in execution. The people, however, showed symptoms of tumult ; and the parliament, obliged to support its own decrees, now endeavoured to suppress the agitation. An imprudent display of military forces had nearly thrown the capital at once into a state of insurrection ; but another turn was given to their appearance, and the peril passed away.

More taxes, however, were found necessary ; and the king in person carrying them to the parliament caused them to be registered in his presence. This compulsion, of course, only served to irritate those it was intended to overawe : the parliament remonstrated, resisted, and at length decreed an union of all the different courts, for the purpose of introducing a reform into the state. The regent and her council now did all that irresolution and weakness could do to encourage the bold proceedings of their opponents. At one time, the union of the courts in the hall of St. Louis was forbidden ; at another, it was tacitly permitted, and then again suppressed with violence. At length, however, the occasion of a great victory gained at Lens was seized by the court to execute a hazardous act of authority. On the day of the *Te Deum*, which celebrated the battle of Lens, the soldiers who, according to custom, lined the streets through which the royal family had to pass, formed in battalions after the ceremony, and occupied the Place Dauphine and the Pont Neuf, while a party of the queen's guards arrested the president Blancmesnil, who had distinguished himself by his animosity to the court, and the counsellor Peter Broussel, a great favourite of the people. The one was carried prisoner to Vincennes, and the other to St. Germain ; but no sooner did the tidings of Broussel's arrest spread through Paris, than

the people rose in every quarter of the town, approached the Palais Royal, where the court then was, and threatened to force the guards.

Both the queen and Mazarin showed great firmness on the occasion; and had it not been for the fears and irresolution of those by whom they were surrounded, would have resisted all menaces, and supported with arms the rash and unwise step they had committed. What might have been the consequences had the tumult gone on throughout the night cannot be known. De Retz asserts, that the capital would have been pillaged; but his sincerity in the whole business is much to be doubted, and his hatred of Mazarin was not concealed. The wily demagogue was now making the first essays of his power over the people; and though it would appear that he directed and even headed them in their clamour for the release of Broussel, while he affected to be only anxious for the safety of the queen and the good of the state; yet he also indubitably saved the maréchal de Meilleraye from a skirmish with the populace, which might have ended ill for that officer, and he eventually persuaded the crowds to disperse and retire to their homes.

De Retz, however, was more than suspected at the palace: every tongue was loud against him; and his passion for intrigue, his indecent life, and the pains he took on all occasions to court the people, added to all the doubtful particulars of that day of tumult, convinced the cardinal that in him was destined to appear one of the most artful, and one of the most powerful, enemies of the court. It seems clear that his arrest was determined, as soon as it was ascertained the crowds had dispersed; and that in addition to this step, Mazarin had taken the resolution of banishing the parliament itself to Montargis. The same night, however, many of De Retz's friends, who had passed the evening at the palace, brought him tidings which roused him into active resistance. As archbishop-coadjutor of Paris, he had obtained vast power, and he now em-

ployed that power with great art to prepare for the morrow a far more serious insurrection. Several of the captains of the quarters and other burgher officers were called to consult with him ; and before daylight the next day the citizens were armed, and ready to take advantage of the first signal to revolt. It was soon given, by the appearance of the carriage of the chancellor rolling towards the Hôtel de Ville.*

That officer knew the danger of the task he undertook, but, nevertheless, he hesitated not to execute it. His brother the bishop of Meaux, and his daughter the duchess of Sully, insisted upon accompanying him, and sharing his fate. By the time he had reached the Pont Neuf, the whole rabble of the town were in arms ; while the more respectable citizens contented themselves with protecting their own houses, without at all impeding the violence of the rest towards those whom they considered to be the enemies of the people. The carriage of the chancellor was instantly attacked, and though it drove furiously on, he had only time — while the people were working themselves up to a pitch of fury sufficient for deliberate murder—to make his escape with his brother and child to the hôtel de Luines, where they were concealed by an old servant, in a boarded closet, separated by a flying partition from a larger room. The crowd, in the mean time, having followed his carriage as fast as they could, tore it to pieces before the gates, and concluding that he had entered there, broke into the house and ran hastily over it, swearing that they would tear him limb from limb, and scatter his body through the streets of the capital. Their steps and their imprecations were all heard ; and making a hasty confession to his brother the bishop of Meaux, he prepared for death. The insurgents, however, passed on without noticing his place of refuge ; and concluding that he had left his carriage and escaped on foot, they quitted the Hôtel de Luines, where he remained till he was rescued by the maréchal de Meilleraye and a regiment of the guard. As he was

* August 27. 1648.

conveyed back to the Palais Royal, the people still endeavoured to snatch him from the hands of those that escorted him, and poured a fire of musketry upon the carriage in which he had been placed, as it passed by the Place Dauphine. The fair duchess of Sully was slightly wounded by a ball in the arm, and several of the guards and attendants were killed; but the chancellor remained unhurt, and returned to the queen with tidings that Paris was completely in the hands of malecontents; that chains were drawn, and barricades raised in every street, and that the most serious consequences were likely to ensue unless she yielded so far as to set Broussel at liberty.

Shortly after his arrival the parliament appeared in procession, to demand the liberation of the prisoner; but the queen received them with firmness, and replied by declaring that she had no personal enmity against Broussel, but that she was determined to make the authority of the king respected. "If," she added, "the courts of law have any boon to demand at my hands let them first return to their duty, and they will not find me slow to confer any favour which they are entitled to ask."

With this unsatisfactory answer the parliament were forced to return, but the populace would not let them pass the barricades; and with threats and imprecations on the head of the chief president, whom they believed to be favourable to the court, they sent them back to demand the immediate liberation of Broussel. At the Palais Royal they retired to a room to deliberate in order to find means of entering into a compromise; and after having received some refreshments a long discussion took place, at the end of which they promised the queen to suspend their obnoxious deliberations for some months if she would set Broussel at liberty. To this, by the advice of her minister, and of the weak and undecided duke of Orleans, she consented; and for a time some degree of tranquillity was restored.

The firing of musketry, however, continued all night;

and the next day, even after Broussel had been set at liberty, several little accidents caused from time to time new assemblies of the people, who by a word might have been directed against the palace itself. Two powder wagons entering the city produced an immediate tumult, in which they were torn to pieces and pillaged. The appearance of some cavalry in the neighbourhood of the town occasioned a report to be spread that it was the queen's intention to carry off the king, and then give the city up to the soldiery; and taking a bold resolution she sent away all extraordinary guards, and, despatching a messenger for the *Prévôt des Marchands*, informed him of what she had done, gave up the keys of Paris to the people, and endeavoured to prove, by the confidence which she displayed, that she entertained no sinister design against the citizens. Towards night the tumult increased, especially around the *Palais Royal*; the apprehensions of the courtiers were so great that all courtly restraint was at an end; and the queen heard, from every one who entered, fresh tales of the abuse showered upon her and her minister, and new tidings of danger. She bore the whole with courage and equanimity; but not so Mazarin, who lost all firmness and presence of mind: he surrounded himself with guards; he disguised himself in grey; he kept his horses and servants constantly prepared for flight by the back of the building, and showed himself utterly incapable of giving the queen either assistance or advice in her moment of need and peril. In a brief conference with the parliament, he was so agitated as to repeat over and over again a few insignificant words, which he seemed to have got by heart, till, in the midst of the danger of the state, and the anxiety of all parties, he excited laughter by his unmanly apprehensions. When at length the tumult ended, and the streets of Paris, as the night advanced, began to resume some degree of tranquillity, whatever might be thought of the firmness and intrepidity of the queen, there was but

one opinion amongst the courtiers as to the weakness and timidity of the minister.

Quiet having been for a time restored, Mazarin entertained hopes of being able to regain his advantage over the parliament during the vacation. He might, indeed, expect to do so on the most justifiable grounds ; as the approach of peace gave reason to believe that a great diminution might be effected in the expenses of the state, and that the people might be thus relieved from the burdensome taxes which weighed them down. On the 24th of October, 1648, a definitive treaty of peace was signed at Munster, between the king of France and the emperor ; and the vast advantages gained by France, the triumph of Richelieu's far-seeing policy, and its full consummation by the diplomatic skill of his successor, were well calculated to raise the government of Mazarin in the favour of the nation. The effect, however, was not such as might have been expected. The parliament had obtained too much power not to demand greater concessions still ; the people were disgusted and shocked by the corruption and ostentation of Emery, the superintendent of finance, an Italian adventurer of the worst character. No immediate relief in regard to imposts could of course be afforded ; and the populace sustained the parliament in all their unjust exactions, while the parliament excited the people to every sort of attack upon the court. One demand followed another, and was granted ; till at length the parliament required permission to sit even during the very vacation on which Mazarin had calculated for the re-establishment of his power. To refuse was useless, as the courts were evidently determined to sit without permission, if they could not obtain it ; and, having granted their request, the queen, with the young king and her minister, quitted Paris and retired to Ruel.

The parliament and the people now became alarmed : the prince of Condé and his victorious army were daily expected, to punish the Parisians for their turbulence, while the king was at a distance from their menaces ;

and Mazarin showed that he felt his power increased by ordering the arrest of Chavigni and Chateauneuf, two persons whom he suspected of giving concealed encouragement to the cabals of Paris. The courage of the malecontents would probably now have failed them, had not the archbishop-coadjutor de Retz sustained their resolution by his own daring, and gained fresh advantages by his skill in intrigue. An old decree — pronounced at the time of the death of Concini, *maréchal d'Ancre* — by which foreigners were forbidden to meddle with affairs of state, was revived against Mazarin; and the prince of Condé himself, jealous of the minister, was brought still farther over to the party of the parliament by De Retz. He was anxious, however, to preserve tranquillity; and, after long negotiations, obtained a declaration, by which Chavigni was restored to liberty, but exiled. The king, too, returned to Paris, the parliament tacitly agreeing to abandon its proceedings against the minister.

It soon, however, found means to recommence the attack upon Mazarin. Libels of the most infamous description, directed both against the cardinal and the queen, were the daily amusement of the Parisians; and the very first edict which issued from the court, for the purpose of borrowing money for the necessary expenses of the state, was made a fresh subject of agitation and resistance. All old grievances were resumed, and negotiations which had commenced with the Spanish viceregal court in Flanders were carried on so openly, that information thereof was obtained by the regent.* A thousand evil reports were circulated to exasperate the people against the regency by the opposite party, who had, by this time, acquired the name of the *Fronde*; and at length it was determined by the queen and her council to carry the king to St. Germain, in order to use more vigorous measures against the refractory parliament.† The deliberations which preceded this step, and the execution of the queen's evasion

* This appears from a letter of the regent, addressed to the *Prévôt des Marchands*, &c., and dated January 5th, 1649.

itself, were conducted with the greatest secrecy ; so that while the turbulent Parisians fancied the court fully occupied with the festivities of Christmas, Mazarin, the prince de Condé, who was now more friendly to the regent, the king, the queen, and all the principal members of the administration, made their escape from Paris on the night preceding Twelfth-day. The army was brought near to Paris ; a *lettre de cachet* was sent to the parliament, commanding it to retire from the capital to Montargis. The prince de Condé declared that he would take Paris in fifteen days ; and Le Tellier, who knew the Parisians better than any of the court, declared that the stoppage of supplies on two market days would be enough to reduce the town by famine.

At first the parliament seemed terror-struck ; but refused to receive the *lettre de cachet*, and sent a humble remonstrance to the queen. Anne of Austria, on her part, would not hear the remonstrance ; and despair gave back to the parliament that energy of which fear had deprived it. A decree was immediately passed, banishing Mazarin from the country, and putting him without the pale of the laws if he remained in France eight days ; and the civil war commenced with an irregular siege of the capital. But before the blockade of Paris had continued two months, though it was weakly conducted, and provisions entered in abundance, all members of the parliament began to grow weary of the war. The generals whom they had elected to command them were divided into various factions ; the common people were unruly and bloodthirsty ; the nobles selfish, vain, and light ; and though Spain offered immediate aid, and the famous Turenne declared against the court, deputies were sent out to treat for a peace ; which was concluded by the parliament on the 11th of March, 1649. The generals, however, refused to take part in this treaty, and endeavoured to gain greater advantages for themselves ; but each sought his own interests, or consulted his own vanity alone. While they thus by their divisions and follies defeated their own purposes, the minister sought

the accomplishment of his, with skill and moderation · the army of Turenne, bribed, as one body, by Mazarin, abandoned its great commander ; and the generals were ultimately obliged to accept the amnesty proposed by the court, which was received by the parliament on the 1st of April. The only person of distinction, whose name was not particularly specified in the amnesty, was Gondi, archbishop-coadjutor of Paris, afterwards cardinal de Retz ; but this was done at his own desire ; for while the general pacification rendered his personal security certain, his apparent exclusion maintained in full force all his influence over the people.*

The queen did not immediately return to Paris, although she had promised to do so ; but, on the contrary, proceeded first to Compiègne and then to Amiens. It has been supposed, that she was induced to act thus by the fears which Mazarin entertained of the Parisian populace. Madame de Motteville, however, who was with the court, does not mention any such motive. Nevertheless, neither the queen nor her minister deceived themselves in regard to the probable stability of the peace. Friends had been rewarded, enemies had been bribed in vain, for both were alike insatiable ; and the supporters of the minister contended that their recompences had not been equivalent to their past services, while his opponents saw that renewed rebellion would obtain fresh advantages. Condé, whose arm had supported the weakness of the court during its absence from Paris, estimated the benefits he had conferred at a much higher rate than he was justified in doing, and became not only exacting, but insolent. In order to give law to the court, he united himself to the Fronde, led by his fair and intriguing sister, the duchess of Longueville ; but

* The British Museum, amongst the Brienne papers, contains one of the most curious collections of documents concerning the wars of the Fronde that I have ever met with. Some of the manifestoes, remonstrances, and proclamations of the Fronde are models in their peculiar kind of composition. Did we not know from other sources that Paris was ringing with riot laughter, ribaldry, and libels during the whole time of the siege, from these documents we should infer that her walls had then contained nothing but a band of eastern patriots defending their rights and liberties, with deep grief, against the worst of tyrants. ● ●

divisions soon spread among the different parties of which the faction consisted, and Mazarin hastened to take advantage of their weaknesses.

Tired of flattering the parliament, Condé made some steps towards a reconciliation with the court. The parliament even began to separate itself from the party of the Fronde ; and in the midst of these intrigues the prince de Condé was persuaded that the leaders of that faction had laid a scheme for assassinating him. This caused a complete rupture between leaders, whose union must have proved ruinous to Mazarin ; but still Condé treated the minister with contempt and indignity, and endeavoured to form a separate party from amongst the various princes of his own family, against both the court and the Fronde. He boldly charged the latter with attempting to assassinate him ; but his accusation against the chiefs of the faction proved unavailing, and only served to drive them over to the court, with whom the parliament was now acting in concert. At length, the domineering tone which he assumed, and the power which he was likely to obtain, produced a coalition of all the most opposite parties against him. The queen sent for the coadjutor at night ; and with him and his friends the arrest of the princes of Condé and Conti and of the duke de Longueville was determined upon. Although the step was bold, with the aid of the parliament and the Fronde it was easily executed ; and on the 18th of January, 1650, the three princes were arrested in the queen's apartments, and conducted prisoners to Vincennes.

Consternation spread amongst their partisans ; but efforts were soon made to support their cause by more vigorous means than mere complaints and remonstrances. The duchess of Longueville fled to Normandy, and excited an insignificant part of that province to revolt. In Burgundy, of which Condé had been governor, symptoms of insurrection began to show themselves ; and a number of his friends and adherents retired to the south, and sowed the seeds of rebellion in Poitou and Guyenne. The court, however, accompanied

by a small force, proceeded at once into Normandy, and forced the duchess de Longueville to fly to Holland by sea. Thence turning towards Burgundy, Mazarin reduced that province to subjection, and then again returned to Paris, crowned with complete success, both in the east and west. While in Burgundy one of the regiments which had accompanied the court had suffered itself to be seduced by the friends of the imprisoned princes, and had contrived a scheme for arresting the minister. But Mazarin received timely warning, and took such means as frustrated the efforts of the conspirators. He exercised great moderation, however, and no severity followed.

In the mean time the factions which had agitated Paris were beginning to show themselves anew. The princess-dowager de Condé appealed to the parliament in favour of her children; and the same irregular assemblies and tumultuous proceedings began to take place which had ushered in the civil war. In the meanwhile the dukes of Bouillon, Rochefoucault, and others, with the young princess of Condé, had excited a revolt in Guyenne; and on his return to Paris, Mazarin found all the former factions blended together in a state of inextricable confusion, from which it would be in vain in this place to attempt to disentangle even the principal threads. Suffice it that Mazarin perceived new cause for apprehension, and induced the queen once more to put herself at the head of her army, and proceed to superintend the siege of Bordeaux. That town, after a gallant resistance, capitulated upon terms honourable to its defenders; and the great moderation which Mazarin showed in this instance, as well as on every other occasion throughout the wars of the Fronde, marks one of the best traits in his character, and distinguishes him strongly from Richelieu. The imprisonment of the princes, however, and the war of Guyenne had done far greater injury to the cardinal and his party than the fall of Bordeaux had done good. The people began to pity the prisoners,

the parliament of Paris showed an interest in their fate and in that of the revolted Bordelais: the duke of Orleans himself, now guided entirely by the coadjutor, took part against Mazarin on several occasions; and on his return from Bordeaux, the minister once more found the capital on the eve of a revolt.

He seemed to trust, however, to his previous success and to his natural cunning to bear him triumphantly through the new difficulties that threatened him. Judging, perhaps wrongly, that the coadjutor had raised up many of the obstacles which had lately impeded his course, and jealous of the prelate's influence with the duke of Orleans, Mazarin showed a determination to break with him entirely. The tale-bearers of the court magnified every appearance against the coadjutor, who at length became alarmed for his personal security. On the arrest of the princes, Mazarin had made a voluntary offer of obtaining for Gondî a cardinal's hat; but the coadjutor had then refused it, knowing that any favour received from the minister would ruin his credit with the people. He now, however, looked upon the rank of cardinal in a very different light; and he demanded the support of Mazarin in obtaining that which he had before declined, being certain that if it were refused his open breach with the minister would restore him fully to the favour of the people; and if it were granted, his new dignity would secure him from the bad effects of Mazarin's enmity. The cardinal, however, opposed his promotion; and Gondî determined to release Condé, and place him at once in direct opposition to the minister.

Vigour was given to this determination by news that Turenne, who had hitherto remained in exile, had gathered together a considerable number of French malecontents, and had been reinforced by a large body of veteran troops from the Spanish Netherlands. He now occupied Chateau Porcien, and Rethel; and the force of the maréchal du Plessis, which was opposed to him, was by no means sufficient to resist his farther progress. In the midst of all the intrigues of the court, however, Ma-

zarin quitted Paris, and, gathering together various bodies of troops, advanced to support Du Plessis. During his absence the Frondeurs, who doubted not that Turenne would easily overthrow the minister, lost no opportunity of turning his absence to advantage. A requisition was presented to the parliament on behalf of the princess de Condé, praying that the princes might be brought to Paris, and either tried or set at liberty. Every means that eloquence, cunning, and deceit could employ were brought forward to obtain that object ; and for several days the proceedings of the parliament became more and more menacing, when suddenly the news arrived that Mazarin had taken Rethel, and immediately afterwards that Turenne had been totally defeated, while marching to succour that town.

Consternation spread amongst the princes' partisans ; and for a time nothing seemed sufficient to raise them from the state of discouragement into which they had been thrown. The coadjutor, however, the princess palatine, the duchess de Chevreuse, and several inferior persons, laboured indefatigably to unite into one party all who favoured the princes and all who disliked the minister. Secret treaties were entered into ; the parliament had already declared itself ; the Fronde, which had strengthened the hands of Mazarin for the arrest of Condé, was now prepared to liberate the princes, in order to destroy the minister, and the duke of Orleans was easily brought to entertain the same views. The only difficulty was to induce him to act openly. All these proceedings had been kept perfectly secret till the minister once more returned in triumph ; and the people even were so little prepared for what was to follow, that they received him well, and thronged to see him pass through the streets. The scene very soon changed, and the clouds darkened over the political horizon. Though his danger was certainly great, Mazarin had still one resource, — to free the princes himself, and make a merit of the act. To this he was pressed by many persons ; and even his most bitter enemies will-

ingly left him the opportunity of doing so on more than one occasion, holding out threats of an union against him which could not be misunderstood. Nevertheless, Mazarin, with that narrow cunning which mingled with and debased many of his most skilful negotiations, now over-reached himself. Believing the threats held out, and the attitude assumed by the parliament, the Fronde, and the duke of Orleans, to be all an unsubstantial display, produced for the purpose of intimidating him, he attempted to deceive them in his turn. But after various delays, his surprise was not small to find that the tremendous coalition with which he had been menaced had really taken place. The parliament led the way, the Fronde followed; and at length the duke of Orleans, too irresolute to be calm, and too weak to be moderate, not only openly declared himself in favour of the princes, but worked himself up into fury in a conversation with the minister, and quitted the palace, vowing that he would never take his seat in the council again till Mazarin had been expelled.

The cardinal, under the sudden tempest which broke upon his head, if we may trust madame de Motteville, showed greater calmness and firmness than he had hitherto evinced in situations of difficulty. A great part of the army was strongly attached to him; a considerable force was within a short distance; and his friends advised him strongly to call the troops to his aid, and once more to assert the royal authority in arms. But Mazarin did not choose to compromise the king and queen in a contention with the parliament and the duke of Orleans; and as soon as he heard the declaration of that prince he sought the regent, and declared that he was ready either to quit the realm, in order to free it from the factions to which his stay seemed to give rise, or to remain, and in her service risk still farther the life which was already threatened on all sides. The queen hesitated long, and Mazarin waited till the last moment that his stay was safe; but at length

he determined to fly, and liberate the princes himself. On the evening of his proposed flight he joined the royal circle, which was extremely crowded, and conversed calmly with the queen in public. One of his confidants, however, having privately informed him that his intended escape from Paris had been rumoured, and that the people were running to arms, he took leave of the queen in a casual manner, and hastening to his own apartments, disguised himself with a red cloak and a plumed hat, and issuing forth, on foot, by the door which led into the rue de Richelieu, he walked to a spot where horses had been prepared for him.

He found the town in a state of great agitation, and had he been recognised would probably have been assassinated. He effected his exit through the gates, however, in safety, and did not pause till he reached St. Germain. He thence proceeded to Havre, to which place the imprisoned princes had been removed; and as he bore a secret order from the queen to set them at liberty, it is probable that he hoped to effect his reconciliation with Condé, and return with him to the capital; but after treating him with much politeness, the three princes set out alone, and Mazarin, losing his hopes, retired at once into exile. He wisely avoided taking advantage of the offer of an asylum made him by the Spanish government of the Netherlands; but, on the contrary, retired to the electorate of Cologne, where he lived in peace, governing the proceedings of the court as absolutely, though not so easily, from the banks of the Rhine, as he had done in the French capital. In a long letter to the king he justified himself from the imputations cast upon him by the Fronde, and set forth his real services to the country. It is generally supposed, also, that he caused the disgrace of the keeper of the seals, who had been certainly intriguing with his enemies, and that it was by his advice that Anne of Austria resolved to gain the prince de Condé, at any price, more for the sake of dividing her opponents than from any substantial support which she could hope to obtain from him. •

In the mean time, the parliament proceeded to every step which could irritate the court, and not only rendered decrees directly levelled against Mazarin, but also obtained declarations, by which all cardinals, whether foreigners or natives, were to be excluded from any share in the government for ever.* But while the body of the law was thus proceeding, other events were taking place which prepared the way for Mazarin's return. Condé, gained to the court, left the duke of Orleans in disgrace; the duke of Beaufort for a time abandoned the Fronde, and attached himself to the princes. The duke of Orleans, timid and ungenerous, forsook the coadjutor Gondi, in order to make his peace with the regent, keeping up with the archbishop, however, a secret correspondence, which soon proved of great utility to both. On the other hand the cardinal, from his place of exile, opposed the fulfilment of those excessive concessions which Condé had exacted, and which would have left the crown stripped of half its power. Condé, indignant at this tergiversation, quarrelled with the queen, put himself at the head of a party, and prepared to wrest from the regency by opposition that which had been denied to favour. But the queen by this time had gained the archbishop-coadjutor and the duke of Orleans; and Condé, thwarted in his plans, and disappointed in his expectations, after long and tedious disputes with the court, the parliament, and the coadjutor, quitted Paris, and retired to Guyenne. Here he raised troops, gathered stores, and treated with Spain; but Turenne declared for the regency; and the queen took prompt measures for opposing force by force.

The court, with the king, who had now reached his majority, set out in the end of September for Berri, in order to conduct the war against the prince de Condé with greater vigour; and messengers were sent to Mazarin, for the purpose of informing him of all that

* M. Retz explains how the court so completely lost its influence in a few words: "La cour chüa toutes choses à son ordinaire; elle se relâcha aussi de toutes choses à son ordinaire."

had occurred, and of inviting him to return to France. Mazarin accordingly advanced to Dinan, where, with the aid of a number of his friends who had joined him, he began to raise troops, for the purpose both of supporting the king and insuring his own safety. News of considerable successes gained by the count de Harcourt against the raw, ill-regulated troops of the prince de Condé, soon reached the cardinal; and at length, at the head of 8000 men, commanded by the marshals d'Aumont and de Hocquincourt, the minister commenced his march into the heart of France. The parliament which had lately shown but little activity, rose in fury as soon as the news of Mazarin's advance reached Paris, pronounced a thousand virulent decrees against him, ordered his splendid library to be sold, and offered 150,000 livres for his head. The effect of parliamentary wrath which gave Mazarin the greatest pain, seems to have been the sale of his library; and the fulminations of the assembly did not make him even hesitate on his march. •

The court was now at Poitiers, and it was the 30th of January, 1652, ere Mazarin reached that fine old town. His reception was more gratifying even than he could have expected: the king and his brother went out to meet him; and the queen loaded him with congratulations, although it had been remarked, and even notified to Mazarin, that her majesty had shown less eagerness for his return since the retreat of Condé to Bordeaux than she had done while her will was more powerfully opposed. He now resumed the title of minister, and wielded the whole power of the state; while Harcourt, Hocquincourt, and Turenne defended the cause of the king in the field. Both armies now approached the capital; and on one occasion the court and minister would have fallen into the hands of the insurgents near Gien, had not the calm firmness of Turenne stopped the impetuous course of Condé, and remedied the defeat of the maréchal de Hocquincourt. Previous to this event, however, an occurrence took place which gave to Mazarin the prospect of better support

than he had hitherto obtained during his administration. He had become the favourite of the regent, it is true, and had at different times been upheld by each of the various factions which had flitted over the phantasmagoria scene of the capital ; but no great and influential body had ever come forward to applaud his conduct, and to reprove his enemies, till a deputation from the clergy of France, headed by the archbishop of Rouen, waited upon the king to present a remonstrance against the violent proceedings of the parliament of Paris towards one of the princes of the church. The archbishop did not fail to seize this occasion of praising the minister ; and the court was not a little gratified to receive this public testimony of the approbation of the French clergy in regard to the step which had just been taken in recalling Mazarin.

The parliament of Paris continued its opposition to the minister ; and the prince de Condé, having quartered his troops in the immediate vicinity of the capital, joined with the duke of Orleans and the courts of law to demand the expulsion of Mazarin, as an enemy of the king and the state, though their own forces were daily carrying on the war against their sovereign. Nothing, however, was concluded ; and at length, on the 2d of July, Turenne, with superior numbers, attacked the army of Condé as the prince was endeavouring to effect his retreat from St. Cloud. Condé took refuge in the Faubourg St. Antoine, which he defended with extraordinary gallantry and skill ; but the larger force of Turenne and his not unequal talent would have overpowered the prince, had not the daughter of the duke of Orleans, unable to persuade her despicable father to act in aid of his cousin, forced her way into the bastille which commanded the field of battle, and poured a cannonade upon a part of Turenne's army which was marching to take Condé in flank, while she caused the guards to open the Porte St. Antoine, and give admission to the prince and his forces.

During the few following days some dreadful scenes of

tumult and confusion now took place in the capital; and a horrible and indiscriminate massacre at the Hôtel de Ville filled the city with terror, and drove all but the more daring and ill disposed from the parliament. But still that body attempted to negotiate with the court in order to obtain the exile of Mazarin, issuing, at the same time, the most insolent decrees, which were instantly annulled by the king's council. At length, Louis retired to Pontoise, commanding the deputies of the parliament to follow him thither; but the parliament on its part now proceeded to open rebellion, appointed the duke of Orleans lieutenant-general of the kingdom, and named the prince de Condé commander-in-chief of the insurgent armies. The court, however, was now no longer to be intimidated; and decrees of the council were issued, rendering void those of the parliament, and summoning that body to follow the king to Pontoise. The duke of Orleans wrote to all the governors of provinces; and the parliament of Paris communicated with all provincial parliaments, in order to bring about a general rising throughout the country; but the result showed, that while rebellion and faction were in the capital, the rest of France desired nothing but tranquillity. Not one governor answered the letter of the duke of Orleans, but De Sourdis; not one parliament was led away by that of Paris, except in Guyenne.

In the mean time, several members of the parliament of Paris found means to escape from the metropolis in disguise and follow the king to Pontoise, where they assembled as the legitimate court, and again proceeded to petition the king to dismiss Mazarin from his councils. The princes had already declared that they would lay down their arms as soon as the minister was gone; and Mazarin himself determined once more to withdraw from the court, and to deprive the insurgents of their only pretext for continuing the war; thus casting upon them the whole blame of any farther tumults which might take place. In consequence of this determination, Louis XIV. issued a declaration in reply to the last remon-

strance of the parliament, and setting forth the high qualities of the minister, he stated that, notwithstanding the great services the crown had received from Mazarin, the king had determined, in compliance with the wishes of his parliament, to grant that permission to retire from France, which the cardinal himself required. Mazarin accordingly left the court at Pontoise and retired to Bouillon, where he still governed the country by means of Le Tellier, who had been reinstated in the ministry. The parliament of Paris, however, the prince of Condé, and the duke of Orleans, continued to treat with the court instead of laying down their arms; and the count of Fuensaldagnes seized the opportunity of attempting to penetrate into France with a considerable army. He had already commenced his march into Picardy, when the vigorous remonstrances of Mazarin, who assured him that the court would sooner join forces at once with Condé than suffer him to advance, alarmed the Spanish general, and induced him to retreat.

In the mean time, the divisions which existed in the faction opposed to the court, soon brought on its own ruin. The duke of Orleans and the Parisians were heartily tired of the war; the prince of Condé was hated by the people, whom he one day courted and the next insulted; personal quarrels were frequent and sanguinary; and at length Condé quitted the capital, on the 13th of October, and threw himself into the hands of the Spaniards. Deep humiliation and despondency succeeded with the Parisians; a degree of agitation which, as De Retz declares, might have been turned to any purpose, took possession of all minds, and nothing was heard but petitions for the king to return. At length, after some hesitation, the court determined once more to take up its residence in Paris, and, not without alarm, the king and queen re-entered the capital. The applause of the people, however, was so great, that all fears were done away; and the first act of the king was to command his uncle, the duke of Orleans, to

retire from Paris with his daughter. The step might be bold ; and De Retz has attempted to prove that it was foolish : but it was successful, and it was necessary ; for nobody in France could doubt that, wherever the duke of Orleans was, there would be faction.

On the day following a general amnesty was published ; and the court applied itself to conciliate the favour of the talented and factious Gondi, now cardinal de Retz, hoping, probably, to deprive him of his authority with the people by attaching him to the court. But De Retz remained intractable ; and at length it was determined to arrest the demagogue, even in the midst of the populace he had so long commanded. This resolution was executed, however, without any difficulty. The coadjutor was made a prisoner at the Louvre, and remained there for several hours, while the news of his arrest spread quickly through the town ; but no tumult or attempt to rescue followed, and he was safely lodged in Vincennes. It is very doubtful whether Mazarin took any share in advising the queen to this measure, and he afterwards himself joined in a petition for the liberation of De Retz ; but it is very clear that no measure was ever more wise. The people were so tired of faction, that the court judged—and judged wisely—that, deprived of the council and direction of their great leader, they would not even rise to give him liberty ; and thus an act which at the commencement of the troubles of the Fronde would have been one of madness, and would certainly have produced an insurrection, now gave the last blow to a party which had already fallen too far to defend itself any longer. Mazarin, it appeared to all, might now return in safety ; but, with wise caution, he remained upon the frontiers of the kingdom, visiting the different generals opposed to the Spaniards, and making preparations to render the efforts of France against her enemies more vigorous and successful for the future than they had been during the civil wars. At length his absence began to surprise the people. No longer arrayed in opposition to his

return, they learned to desire it; and when he at length did come back to the capital, his entrance was far more triumphant in appearance than even that of the king had been. The young monarch and all the court went out to meet him at the distance of two leagues from Paris; all the courts and associated bodies of the metropolis, even to the parliament itself, came to congratulate him on his return; apartments were assigned him in the Louvre; the people shouted their gratulations in the path of him they would have murdered a year before; and the whole city gave itself up to rejoicings, which were continued far into the night. The coadjutor himself might almost have heard the sounds from his solitary prison at Vincennes. Such is popularity.

Some disputes with the parliament, it is true, did succeed; but Mazarin, taught by experience, mingled a degree of severity with his gentleness, and succeeded in preventing any fresh revolt. Provence, Burgundy, and Guyenne returned to obedience; and while Turenne maintained the honour of France in the field, internal union, commerce, and tranquillity began to reappear throughout the country. The first three years of the regency had been carried on by the force of Richelieu's administration; all then fell into disorder: but, after the wars of the Fronde, a new impetus was given to the government by the great and successful exertions to which it had been driven; while, at the same time, the reaction which the oppression of Richelieu had called forth amongst the people died away, and left the path open to the gorgeous despotism of Louis XIV. So completely had a change come over all the feelings of the nation, that in the description afforded by an Italian of a splendid fête at the Hôtel de Ville, given to the minister by the magistrates of the town, on the 29th of March, 1653, we find that the Place de Grève was filled with the populace, who received Mazarin with continued shouts of applause, called down benedictions on his head, and poured forth execrations on those who had calumniated him. The

minister showed himself frequently at the window, and was received with loud acclamations, while the hotel itself, yet reeking with the blood of those who had been slain on a mere suspicion of favouring him, and black with the smoke of flames which his hated name had kindled, was now crowded with the wives and daughters of citizens who had acted many a blood-thirsty part against him in the wars just past.

In the beginning of the following year, Mazarin saw the continuance of his favour confirmed by the marriage of his niece, Anna Maria Martinozzi, with the prince de Conti, brother of the great Condé. It is not improbable that the prince, who was destitute alike of his brother's talents and his firmness, was glad to make his peace with the successful minister whom he had so bitterly offended, by any means short of actual degradation. He continued, however, faithful to the king, although various severe measures were adopted in regard to the prince de Condé himself, who, on the contrary, remained in actual rebellion. About the same time a scheme for assassinating the cardinal was discovered, and Condé was accused of having bribed the assassins. Madame de Chatillon, also, was supposed to be implicated; but who it was that actually instigated the villains to their base and cowardly design has never been clearly shown. The two men themselves were arrested, tried, found guilty of having undertaken, *for a price*, to murder the minister, and were condemned to be broken on the wheel. Mazarin interceded for their lives, but was refused; and only obtained, as a mitigation of their sentence, that they should be strangled ere the more cruel part of the punishment awarded was put in force.

The coronation of Louis XIV. took place soon after, while the armies of the king kept the field against the Spaniards; but previous to that ceremony, Mazarin, who had a peculiar fondness for military fame, led the young monarch to the siege of St. Menehould, which place was quickly taken, and afterwards accompanied him to the attack of Stenai, which also surrendered. Arras, how-

ever, was in the mean time besieged by Condé and the Spaniards, and it now became the great object of the French generals to relieve that important city. Turenne, rather than sacrifice it, determined to attack the enemy in his lines ; and that famous battle took place, which saved Arras from the power of Spain. With Turenne remained the glory of the day ; but Mazarin drew down upon his head no small ridicule by attributing to himself in a despatch, written in the king's name to the parliament, all the honour of having raised the siege of Arras, without once mentioning Turenne.

One of the most important acts of Mazarin's political life was now about to follow. Charles I. of England was dead. Cromwell swayed the destinies of Great Britain ; and Charles II., an exile and a wanderer, derived a feeble and inefficient support from France. The protector, offended with France, manifested a disposition to enter into a league with Spain ; and Mazarin resolved, at any price, to induce Cromwell to break off negotiations, which, if successful, would have proved ruinous to the French interests. The history of the whole transaction is too long for detail. Suffice it to say that the commanding mind of Cromwell overbore all the barriers of Mazarin's timid policy. The French minister yielded much of the dignity of the crown he served, suffered the usurper of the English throne to interfere in the affairs of France respecting the huguenots of Nismes, abandoned to their fate the catholics of England, and forgot the rites of hospitality and the dues of kindred, which Charles II. could claim from the French monarch ; but he gained his object, detached Cromwell from the interests of Spain, and secured powerful support in his operations against Flanders. That support was indeed the more necessary, as the prince de Condé, commanding a body of Spanish troops, still kept up a dangerous correspondence with many persons in France, and had very nearly obtained, through the mediation of a counsellor

in the parliament, named Chenailles, possession of the important town of St. Quentin. The duchess of Châtillon, who, during the preceding year, had endeavoured to seduce the maréchal d'Hocquincourt to the interest of the prince de Condé, had been arrested by order of the minister; and he now proceeded with still greater severity against Chenailles; though a strong proof of Mazarin's humanity is afforded by the deposition of one of the witnesses on the trial, who stated that, when the minister discovered the treasonable proceedings of the prisoner, he exclaimed, "I would rather have given 50,000 crowns than that he should have fallen into such an error!" Although the proceedings were conducted as in a case of high treason, and the prisoner was found guilty, the sentence was comparatively mild. He was stripped of his dignities, offices, and possessions, and banished the country.

No sooner had Mazarin concluded the arrangement with Cromwell, and left Spain, exhausted as she was by long wars, without the support of a single ally, than he applied himself eagerly to induce that country to treat for a final peace. Accordingly Lionne, one of the council, was sent secretly to Madrid to demand the hand of the infanta for Louis XIV., and offer those terms by which the cardinal hoped to bring the war to a termination. Long negotiations succeeded; but Philip IV. had then no male heir, and the hand of the infanta was sought also by the emperor for his son. Thus the wishes of Mazarin were frustrated for the time, and the war with Spain continued. That war, however, was carried on upon the part of France with great and decided success. Some partisans of the prince de Condé attempted to excite revolt in the provinces, and from time to time the parliament offered some resistance to the will of the minister; but, mingling firmness with moderation, Mazarin soon quelled all internal opposition; and early in the year 1658 he led Louis XIV. to the siege of Dunkirk. Condé and don John of Austria immediately united their forces, and advanced

to the relief of that place, but were met upon the sand-hills by Turenne, who, after a severe and long contested battle, forced them to retreat. Dunkirk surrendered in a few days, and the siege of Gravelines succeeded ; but very soon after the first of those places had fallen, the king was taken violently ill at Calais, and for some days great apprehensions were entertained for his life.

Intrigues of course immediately took place ; and Mazarin, it would appear, wisely determined, in case of the king's death, to quit France at once, and retire to Rome. The monarch, however, recovered ; and several of those who, during his illness, had shown their purposes against Mazarin too clearly, were driven into exile by the minister. He had now gained the ascendancy over the mind of the young king more completely than he had formerly done in regard to Anne of Austria ; and he is accused of showing some degree of neglect towards his former benefactress, which madame de Motteville attributes to the hesitation that the queen had shown in recalling him about the time of his march to Poitiers.

While these events were passing in France and on the frontiers of Flanders, two changes had taken place affecting Mazarin's views in regard to Spain. In 1657 the emperor had died ; and the cardinal instantly sent ambassadors to Germany, in order to obtain the imperial dignity for the elector of Bavaria, and thus strike another stroke at the house of Austria. In this he was not successful ; and the electors placed the crown on the head of Leopold, son of the last emperor ; but events had occurred in Spain, of a kind more favourable to his views. Philip IV. had married again, and a male heir had diminished the importance attached to the hand of the infanta in her father's eyes, though not in the eyes of Mazarin. To conclude the war as soon as possible, if it could be done upon advantageous terms, was now the great object of Mazarin, who, though he had sustained Richelieu's external policy with firmness and success, and had reaped in the peace of Westphalia rich fruit from the seed which his bold predecessor had sown, was naturally of a pacific dis-

position, and had brought to the French cabinet that Italian spirit of negotiation which was so well calculated to conclude what it had required a more powerful mind to commence. Instead, however, of once more directly appealing to the court of Spain, now humbled by repeated losses, Mazarin affected to listen to proposals which had been made regarding the marriage of the young king with the princess Marguerite of Savoy ; and for the purpose of giving public testimony of his desire to conclude that alliance, he led the court to Lyons, in order to meet the duchess of Savoy and her daughter.

In promoting the marriage of Louis with either the infanta or the princess Marguerite, Mazarin made a noble and a prudent sacrifice to honour and good policy. The young monarch, after his return to Paris, had been frequently thrown in company with mademoiselle de Mancini, the cardinal's niece, and showed so decided a preference for her that the queen and the court became alarmed. He sought her on all occasions ; and though her personal attractions were but few, yet he seemed never content but in her society. She, on her part, eager and passionate by nature, did not scruple to show her attachment to the young monarch ; and as no one suspected her of overstepping the bounds of virtue, it was not by any means impossible that Louis might be induced to raise her to share his throne. Mazarin had far more power over him than his mother : the princess of Savoy was extremely ugly : very slight impediments would have prevented any renewal of the negotiation with Spain ; and if Louis XIV. ever felt through life the slightest portion of true love for any being on earth but himself, it was for mademoiselle Mancini.

Happily, however, for Mazarin, what was most wise and what was most honourable, in this instance, went hand in hand. Without apparently yielding a thought to the more ambitious course, he led the French court, as I have said, to Lyons, on the 23d of October*, where it was joined shortly after by that of Savoy. * Mazarin's

views, however, were soon explained to the duchess of Savoy ; and as she could not deny that every principle of good policy required the French minister to prefer the infanta to her daughter, she contented herself with claiming consideration in case the cardinal should not be successful in his purposes regarding Spain. But the first part of Mazarin's plan was already perfectly successful. The rumours, which he had caused to be spread of an approaching marriage between the young king and the princess of Savoy had reached Madrid and alarmed the ministers of Spain. An envoy from Philip was already on his way to renew negotiations, when Louis reached Lyons ; and in a few days after he appeared, bearing an offer of the hand of the infanta. The French court, having gained this object, returned immediately to Paris, and a preliminary treaty of peace was at once concluded. The greatest difficulties, in regard to these arrangements, had arisen from the situation of the prince de Condé, then actually serving Spain against his country. The Spanish ambassador, of course, sought to obtain favourable terms for the prince ; but Mazarin held out sternly against one whom he justly considered a rebel, though a noble one. Condé, however, generously determined to prove no obstacle to the re-establishment of peace ; and wrote to the Spanish ambassador to abandon his interests rather than allow so laudable an endeavour as that of restoring tranquillity to Europe to be frustrated.* Neither Mazarin nor the ambassador suffered this letter to prove greatly injurious to Condé ; but it facilitated the negotiation ; and as soon as the preliminary treaty was signed, the cardinal commanded the French armies to pause in their career of success. For doing so, ere the definitive treaty of peace was ratified, he has been greatly blamed ; and it is probable that he did thereby lose several advantages in the conferences which he afterwards held with the Spanish minister, don Louis de Haro. For the purpose of entering into these conferences,

* It is not very clearly ascertained whether this letter was written during the conferences in Paris, or those which took place afterwards on the frontier between don Louis de Haro and Mazarin.

Mazarin set out from Paris on the 26th of June: but before he did so, two of the most mortifying events which he had yet met with occurred to him; and his conduct in either circumstance shows his character in a noble and interesting point of view.

During the holy week of the year 1659, a large party of libertine young men set out for the château of Roissi, determined to outrage all the feelings of their severer brethren, by dedicating to debauchery and impiety a period particularly set apart by the Roman catholic religion as a time of mortification and prayer. At the head of these, trusting to his uncle's power and favour, was Mancini, the nephew of Mazarin; but the scandal of these proceedings soon reached the court, and the conduct of the cardinal was very different from that which had been expected. From amongst the whole he selected his nephew as an example; and leaving the rest to be reprimanded by the king, he banished Mancini from the court, refusing to hear any supplications in his favour. The passionate attachment of the young king to his niece, Maria de Mancini, was also at this time a subject of great uneasiness to the minister. Negotiations were far advanced regarding the king's marriage with the infanta. The queen-mother abhorred mademoiselle de Mancini, on account of the mutual love existing between her and Louis XIV.; and yet the monarch, after his return from Lyons, displayed more and more his attachment to the young Italian. Mazarin determined to withdraw her from the court, and Louis, in a moment of passion, proposed to his minister to raise her to the throne. Mazarin, however, had by this time chosen his part; and we have the authority of one not too favourable to that minister (mad. de Motteville) for saying that he acted with a firmness, a dignity, and a disinterestedness more honourable to the man than his most skilful measures were to the minister. He replied to the king's proposal, that he had been chosen by the monarch's father, and afterwards by his mother, to aid him with his best councils; that up to that time he had served him with inviolable fidelity, and that he should

take care not to abuse the confidence placed in him by the king's confession of such a weakness, nor to misuse the power which Louis gave him in his territories by suffering a thing to be done so contrary to his sovereign's interest and honour. The king was his own master, he added, but he himself had a right to dispose of his niece ; and he would rather stab her with his own hand than raise her to the throne by the betrayal of his trust.

This conference was immediately followed by the exile of Maria Mancini from the court ; and though, doubtless, good policy required Mazarin to act as he did act, yet happy is the man who, in situations of difficulty and temptation, has both the wisdom to see that good policy and a high sense of honour are united, and the firmness to tread the giddy precipice of power without stumbling over some of those small but fatal irregularities which selfishness strews thickly in the path of ambition.

'After the removal of his niece from the court of France, Mazarin set out to enter into those important negotiations which ended in a peace *, that all the diplomatic skill of the agents employed at Munster and Osnabruck had not been able to effect. Since the treaty of Westphalia, Spain had continued the war against France and Holland unsupported by any other power, and now treated with her principal opponent under the disadvantage of exhausted finances and defeated armies. But still the persevering arrogance of the court of Philip rendered her demands as extreme, and her obstinacy as insurmountable by any ordinary means, as if she had been at that moment in the height of prosperity. No man, however, was better calculated than Mazarin to encounter the difficulties of such a negotiation. Patient, placable, and sincerely desirous of terminating, in a solid peace, the war which he had carried on successfully during his whole administration, he was neither to be irritated by the pride of Spain, nor wearied out by her delays. At the same time his keen sagacity and subtle activity were the best arms that could be used

* June 26. 1659.

against the high pretensions of the Spanish minister, and the tedious and dilatory proceedings of a pompous court. Don Louis de Haro, prime minister of Spain, advanced to the frontiers of his country, while Mazarin, on his part, proceeded to St. Jean de Luz; and a temporary building having been erected on a small island in the midst of the Bidassoa, the conferences were there opened and continued for several months.

Many difficulties arose which it would be tedious to dwell upon in this place; but at length all points of import were sufficiently determined to justify the court of France in approaching the place of conference. The prince of Condé also returned to his native land after an absence of several years; but the death of the second son of the king of Spain, by bringing the infanta nearer to the crown, caused some apprehension lest the treaty of marriage should be broken off. Upon that alliance were fixed the hopes and expectations of Mazarin; for he had long before perceived, that the succession to the Spanish throne might probably ere long fall to the lot of the infanta; that, under such circumstances, no renunciation of contingent rights, on her part, would be of any importance*; and, therefore, that by a marriage between herself and Louis XIV. the consummation of Richelieu's policy would be fully effected. He had clearly announced his views upon this subject so long before as the signature of the peace of Munster, and he had never ceased to labour for the same object. Various causes contributed to procrastinate the negotiations; and though the promise of the infanta's hand was not withdrawn on the death of her brother, Mazarin found himself obliged to make some farther concessions than he had at first intended.

The French court, in the mean time, remained during the winter in Provence; but all things being

* One of his letters to the French plenipotentiaries at Munster in 1645 shows that he had considered all the results of this marriage fifteen years before it took place; and that Spain also considered the renunciation of the contingent rights of the infanta in the same light as the French minister, is proved by the words of Philip IV, when the act of renunciation was read to him. "Esto es una patarata," he said; "y si faltasse el principe de derecho mi Hija ha de heredar."

at length arranged for a meeting between the royal families of France and Spain, and for the marriage of the young king with the infanta, Philip on his side advanced to Fontarabia, while Louis proceeded to St. Jean de Luz. Some points which had been left unsettled concerning the exact frontier line of the two kingdoms were now arranged, and, by the skill of Mazarin, rendered favourable to France. The marriage took place; and the famous peace of the Pyrenees was sworn to by the two monarchs in each other's presence. This negotiation, which ultimately seated the Bourbons upon the throne of Spain, is the most celebrated act of Mazarin's political life, although the enemies of that minister founded upon it an accusation of weakness and bad policy, which only showed their own want of skill and diplomatic knowledge. Setting aside, however, their objections, which are scarcely relevant, and not even inquiring whether the success of Mazarin's most ardent wishes have not ultimately, by accidental circumstances, proved more detrimental than beneficial to the country he wished to serve, there is another point of view under which his conduct may be regarded. No man saw more clearly that it had been absolutely necessary for all the states in Europe to unite for the purpose of humbling the house of Austria; no one knew better that that sovereign house had extended its dominion too far for its own security; and yet the grand object which he proposed to himself in his treaty of the Pyrenees was to place the house of Bourbon very nearly in the same position which had been filled by the house of Austria. His object was a mistaken one: to humble the house of Austria, to guard against its ever again attaining inordinate power, was wise; perhaps to extend the territories of France on the side of Flanders, and to incorporate Franche Comté and Lorraine with the dominions which his sovereign already possessed, was prudent and politic; but the seating a Bourbon race upon the throne of Spain was the greatest mistake committed in the policy of the seventeenth century.

After the marriage had taken place, the court returned

by slow journeys to Fontainebleau, where the young king and his bride remained, while Mazarin and the queen-mother proceeded to Paris, to cause preparations for the public entrance of the two sovereigns. On the minister's arrival, all the great bodies of the capital waited upon him, to compliment him on his return, and to express their admiration of his conduct in the difficult negotiations which had restored peace to Europe. The parliament itself sent a deputation of its most distinguished members to honour and congratulate the minister, on whose head, not long before, they had set a price; and rejoicings of every kind welcomed him to the capital, as the great benefactor of the country which had adopted him. In reply to the various addresses which he received, Mazarin spoke long and eloquently; but his health was already giving way under the wearing influence of cares and exertions. A fit of the gout succeeded; and we are told that unskilful treatment repelled the disease from his extremities, and endangered his life. The young king, who had by this time removed from Fontainebleau to Vincennes, hearing of his situation, came privately to Paris to visit him, and ask his advice concerning some proceedings of the court; but Mazarin was, at the moment of his arrival, suffering an aggravation of his former pains, by an attack of the stone, and his mind, for a time, gave way under the agony he endured. "Sire," he replied to the king, "you come to ask the advice of a man who has lost the command of his reason. Sir, my mind wanders!" On this reply, the king is said to have retired into a neighbouring corridor, and wept over the prostration of that intellect which he had learned to revere in his earliest youth.

Mazarin, however, recovered, and endeavoured to cover the decay of his frame by the external splendour of his appearance. In the beginning of September, 1660, the king and queen made their public entry into Paris, with all that theatrical pomp and splendour which suited the character of the times, the monarch, and the nation. The household of Mazarin, however

which figured in the procession^s, was scarcely inferior in magnificence to that of the king. We are told that it took an hour in passing the gates, and that the attendants of the monarch's brother seemed pitiful when compared with those of the minister. But his power and his splendour were now drawing to their close. During the autumn he became worse in point of health, and seldom left his apartments, where the meetings of the council of state were regularly attended by the young king. A slight amelioration took place in the month of February, 1661, and the dying minister followed the court to Vincennes ; but there his illness increased ; symptoms of water in the chest succeeded ; and on the 9th of March, meeting death with unshrinking firmness, Mazarin rested for ever from the toils of state.

We are told, on sufficient authority, that during the last days of his life Mazarin endeavoured eagerly to persuade the king to retain in his service Le Tellier, Lionne, and Colbert : the first had shown himself not incapable of sincere attachment, and was an active clear-sighted, intelligent man of business ; the second has been suspected of being both less faithful and less talented ; the third was the greatest and most patriotic statesman that France has ever known. But at the same time that the minister endeavoured to secure the fortune of those whom he had trained in the ways of policy, he gave his sovereign the singular, the wise, and the prophetic advice to dispense, for the future, with the services of a prime minister, and to govern his kingdom for himself.

Such were some of the cares which agitated Mazarin upon his deathbed ; but there were others of a more private nature which did not affect him less. The means which he had taken to accumulate, in a few years, the immense fortune which he left, in dying disturbed his conscience ; and as the king, if any one, was the person who had suffered, Mazarin, to quiet his own mind, made a voluntary donation of

all that he possessed to the monarch a few days before his death. Louis, as a matter of course, restored to him his property, giving him permission to dispose of it as he pleased; and the minister, completely satisfied by this piece of acting, divided his enormous wealth amongst his relations. In regard to the amount which he thus left much doubt exists; but it is clear that to one of his nieces alone he left 28,000,000 livres.

Although it is probable that Louis began to grow weary of the domination of Mazarin, yet there is no reason to believe that he did not sincerely regret him. No one at the court even affected to do so, except the king; but that young monarch went into mourning on his death, expressed deep grief, and confirmed all the appointments which he had made ere he died. In Notre Dame, a magnificent funeral service was celebrated, by the king's order, in memory of Mazarin; and, at his own desire, his heart was sent to the church of the Theatins, — an order which he first introduced into France, while his ashes were deposited in the chapel of the college he himself had founded. All his personal requests Louis attended to with scrupulous care; and through life he honoured the memory of his minister, by punishing or neglecting those who ventured to speak against him. "There is a great diversity of opinions respecting Cardinal Mazarin," says M. Dipping. "Some historians have regarded him as a statesman of the first order; others have seen in him nothing but a contemptible personage and a minister often incompetent and always feeble. One must allow that, putting aside the degree of exaggeration displayed in this last opinion, his conduct in different circumstances justifies the most opposite judgments." I cannot exactly agree with monsieur Dipping in his conclusion. That all men have weak points in their character, and that those weak points will lead them sometimes to act in opposition to the impulses of their higher qualities, there can be no doubt; but it does not seem to me that Mazarin displayed more of these contradictions than any other

statesman, or any other man, would have done in circumstances of great difficulty.

Very simple causes seem to have produced all the defects in his policy, especially those defects which encouraged and protracted the civil war. He was naturally timid; and at his entrance into power he was utterly ignorant of the laws, customs, and character of the French people. This ignorance led him continually into difficulties which he had not foreseen, while his timidity prevented him from crushing the opposition which he thus created, as Richelieu would have done under similar circumstances. The queen-mother, though less ignorant in regard to the country in which she had lived so long, was not competent to correct the errors of her minister; and Emery, whom Mazarin first employed in that most delicate branch of administration, the finances, was even less acquainted with the genius and rights of the people than the cardinal himself, and did every thing that could be done to shock the prejudices, and draw down the wrath of the French nation. Mazarin, one of the most penetrating and sagacious of men, comprehended in a moment the characters of the individuals with whom he had to deal; detected them under all shapes, and penetrated all disguises: he saw, with unerring skill, the embryo of great genius in the mind of youth, long before it was apparent to others, he even understood as thoroughly, perhaps, as ever man did that strange and complex thing, human nature; but he did not understand or appreciate, especially at first, the peculiar modification of human nature which distinguishes the inhabitants of France. The Spaniards he knew well; and, when occasion served, played upon them as an instrument, and made them sound what stop he pleased. To deal with the Germans he found more difficult; but, with regard to them, he was placed in a commanding position, which enabled him as far to dictate terms as his natural moderation permitted. — With the French it was very different. He was placed in a most difficult situation, as the successor of a minister of far greater powers of mind, of far more intimate

knowledge of the people, ~~if~~ a determined and ruthless character, and of sagacity no way inferior to his own. Richelieu had ridden the French people as a fiery charger, with a heavy curb and a strong hand; but, when he was dead, the nation found the curb gone, the hand tender, the rider ignorant of the charger's mettle, and ran away amidst precipices equally dangerous to all. Mazarin's ignorance of the national character of the people he had to govern, his ignorance even of the very laws by which he was to rule, a large legacy of difficulties left him by his predecessor, and a character originally timid and yielding, appear to me to have caused all the errors of his administration; while his keen sagacity, his diplomatic subtlety, his indefatigable activity, his close powers of application, and his persevering constancy, obtained for France, and for himself, those immense advantages which far more than counterbalanced the evil consequences of his faults.

That he divined Louis XIV.*, that he trained Colbert, that he detected and overcame De Retz, may well be received as proofs of his penetration, his sagacity, and his political skill. That he carried on successfully the vast designs of Richelieu, that he maintained the honour of France in the field, and that he closed one of the most memorable wars in history by two treaties in the highest degree advantageous to the country he was called to govern, will always place his name high amongst the statesmen of modern Europe. That he passed through a fierce civil war without shedding one drop of blood upon the scaffold, although the hatred of faction was directed personally against himself, that he was always the advocate of peace where it was compatible with honour, that he never raised his voice but to mitigate punishment or to allay animosity, may be told to the honour of his heart. His severity towards his nephew, his firmness in regard to his niece, display that best kind of political wisdom, which combines virtue and prudence; and that, after

* He was accustomed to say that there was enough in Louis to make "four kings and one honest man."

having been hated and despised by the French nation, he rendered himself loved and admired, must have proceeded from high qualities of his own, as well as from the levity of the people.

Thus far all is fair ; but Mazarin was not, by any means, without great defects. He was avaricious to an extraordinary degree, and but little scrupulous in regard to the means of increasing his wealth ; he was subtle and deceitful even to his best friends, mean in his condescension to those he feared, and occasionally overbearing and insolent to those who opposed him. As superintendent of the young king's education, he shamefully neglected his duty ; and by so doing drew upon himself a charge which, perhaps, was just, of desiring to keep the monarch in ignorance, in order that his own power might be of longer duration. I do not find any instances of gratitude recorded in his favour ; and to the queen, Anne of Austria, he was certainly ungrateful. In early life he was modest and unassuming ; but years and success, which gave him firmness and dignity, rendered him also ostentatious and vainglorious in the most extravagant degree.

He first introduced at the court of France the passion for gaming which had long been common in Italy ; and he thus destroyed his own health, ruined and degraded the French nobility, and did much to demoralise the whole people.* After long days of fatigue, anxiety, and exertion of mind, he would pass great part of the night at the gaming table, employing over his cards, with even less honesty than in his negotiations, the same subtle spirit which animated his whole policy. Others, however, we are told, might cheat him also with impunity, provided they did so with such address as either to conceal the deceit, or win his admiration of the cunning. He has been accused of personal cowardice ; and that he evinced a degree of fear on more than one occasion is

* So deeply was the young monarch himself infected with this vice, that, even in the boat which conveyed him and his bride from Langon to Bordeaux, he could not refrain from play ; and one of the courtiers (an abbé) lost 50,000 crowns ere the party broke up.

undoubted: but, on the other hand, in various circumstances of great danger, he showed not only perfect coolness, but great presence of mind. At Casal he displayed neither fear nor hesitation, though both the armies were firing upon each other when he passed between them; and in many other instances in the field he exposed himself unnecessarily to imminent danger. At the same time we must remark, that the only occasions on which he gave signs of personal terror occurred during the tumults in Paris; and even the great Condé acknowledged that he was himself the greatest coward on earth in such warfares, on which he bestowed a witty but somewhat dirty epithet. The faults of omission in a man of immense power nearly rise into the enormity of crimes: and when we say that during many years of tranquillity and unbounded authority, Mazarin founded no great institution; led the way to no important improvement, either in the government arrangements or the state of society, and introduced into France nothing but the Opera; that he suffered the finances of the state to fall into terrible decay, and left the talents which he knew Louis XIV. to possess uncultivated, and very nearly undirected*; we accuse him of more serious errors than any that he committed during the wars of the Fronde.

In private life, his character has been very variously represented: to those whom he did not seek to please, he was, we are told by madame de Motteville, dry, cross, and petulant, affecting more humility in adverse than in prosperous times. He was fond of raillery, and sometimes indulged in it too far; he had naturally considerable taste for the fine arts, and was a discerning and liberal friend to science and literature; nor, probably, was his patronage of literature at all directed to secure praise to himself; for, although he was by no means without personal vanity, he seems to have been perfectly

* Mazarin, though superintendent of the king's education, left him, as before observed, miserably destitute of knowledge, but towards his death he became sensible of his error, and, in his letters to the monarch during the negotiation for peace with Spain, gave him the most profound lesson in the arts of diplomacy that any one then living could furnish. He also endeavoured to improve the finances, and succeeded in a degree.

callous to all the satires * that were written against him, and very little obliged to those who took the trouble of defending him. In person he was remarkably handsome, with a peculiarly fine forehead and eyes; he was active and dexterous at various exercises, and skilful at all games.† To those he sought to please, his manner was most captivating; and, though he always spoke French with a foreign accent, he was nevertheless eloquent, witty, and adroit in using that tongue. No one told a story, or wrote a letter, better than Mazarin; and madame de Motteville, though she loved him not, acknowledged that he was "the most agreeable man in the world."‡ During his life, and after his death, his character and policy were subjected to the strictures of many; and, though generally lauded by the rest of Europe, were blamed and scoffed at in France. It must, however, be remembered that, surrounded with difficulties, opposed by factions, and impeded by civil war, under his administration Alsace, Artois, and Roussillon were re-annexed to France; that a way was laid open for her arms into Flanders, Germany, and Italy; and that by his hand was won the prize for which Richelieu had begun the strife.

* He deprived Scarron of his pension for having written the *Mazarinade*, but, as he never attempted to punish any one else for much more atrocious libels, it was probably the ingratitude of the poet at which he struck this blow, and not his insolence. The queen, Anne of Austria, was not so forgiving, and many of the satires, in which she was personally assailed, were followed by sanguinary punishments.

† In another place, however, she does not give the most agreeable description of him. She says in her *Memoirs* (vol. ii. p. 350), "Il était plus humain et plus doux dans le malheur que dans la prospérité; il ne fuyait pas ceux qui lui voulaient parler avec la même sécheresse. Malgré la douceur du cardinal, il n'en avait pas souvent dans son procédé, ni même dans ses paroles: elles étaient quasi toujours sèches, et fort différentes de ses promesses, qui ne produisaient jamais, ou rarement, de bons effets, s'il n'y était contraint par l'intrigue des prétendants: ils ont quasi toujours arraché ses bienfaits de sa faiblesse plutôt que de sa bonté."

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